

Jan - Feb

The Christian choice,  
by Cardinal  
Basil Hume, page 10

# TUC pledges support as steel strike begins

The TUC yesterday gave its formal support to more than 100,000 striking steel workers. The prospect grew of a complete blockade against the import and transportation of steel. The full board of the British Steel Corporation meets this morning with production at a standstill.

## Imports blockade threat grows

By Donald Macintyre

**L**abour Reporter

The steel union's hopes of imposing a blockade against imports grew yesterday as the TUC assured them of formal support for the strike by more than 100,000 workers in the industry's public sector.

With iron and steelmaking in the British Steel Corporation at a standstill, Mr Len Murray, General Secretary of the TUC, said he would be asking all affiliated unions "to do nothing that will impede the prosecution of the strike".

Mr Sidney Weighill, the National Union of Railways' general secretary, promised the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation that he would be tightening instructions to his members, who include crane drivers and lock gate operators at nationalised ports, to stop the movement of imported steel, iron ore for BSC, and products of BSC already in rail terminals.

The International Transport Federation, on which Mr Weighill is the senior British representative, is also circulating a request "to use all the means at your disposal to see that no steel is moved from or through your country to Great Britain until further notice".

Mr William Sirs, general secretary of the JSTC, who was promised by Mr Mosley Evans, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, that "several actions would be recommended this week to lorry drivers and dockers' representatives, made it clear yesterday that the JSTC and the National Union of Shipstainers are placing heavy emphasis on halting imports.

He said yesterday: "We believe that an effective ban on imports would persuade industrial consumers of steel to use their influence with the Government and the corporation to change their stance".

Announcing last night that the TUC would be circulating affiliated unions to ensure support, Mr Murray said: "What we are concerned to get is a speedy settlement of this dispute and to exert maximum pressure on the British Steel Corporation to get them to recognise the facts of life".

He added: "What we have got here is a dispute which was not sought by the BSC or the unions concerned. The dispute seems to stem from the excessively rigid attitude of the Government and the determination of the Government to impose their theoretical monetary policies on negotiations with the result that they have seized up".

The JSTC, who have issued general directions to their members along TUC guidelines on organisation, will endorse secondary picketing—for example, of smaller ports—if necessary.

## DAILY WORKER

### WOOLLEN WORKERS TAKE THE FIELD

REVOLUTION IN THE FIELD  
PICKET AND STAGE STRIKES AGAINST  
WAGE REDUCTIONS  
PULL AWAY FROM THE FIELD

Flying high: Fifty years of keeping the Red Flag flying high in Britain were celebrated yesterday by the Morning Star with an editorial warning Mrs Thatcher that it will fight to stop her wrecking the country. The paper had a chilly reception on January 1, 1930. Wholesalers barred it until 1942 Page 13

French prices freed

Prices in French shops have been freed of a retail price maintenance, except for some types of food. Consumer associations fear the effects of the measure. One of them calls for the establishment of consumer centres to monitor expected price increases and force traders to be competitive. Page 4

### EEC faces deadlock

The EEC is entering 1980 in a state of confusion, marked by Anglo-French hostility and the prospect of a prolonged deadlock over the Community budget. The time is fast approaching when Mrs Thatcher will have to use the weapon of obstruction openly or risk having her bluff called by the other EEC leaders. Page 4

### Cash for transplants

The British Kidney Patient Association says it will pay for kidney transplants at Dulwich Hospital, London, where the operations have been halted by the commissioners appointed by Mr Patrick Jenkins, Secretary of State for Social Services, after they sacked the area health authority. Page 3

Montgomery's statue

A 14ft cardboard model of Field Marshal Lord Montgomery of Alamein was erected on the site outside the Ministry of Defence. Nearly all the £30,000 has been bronze, by Oscar Nemon, has been possibly 50 people. Page 3

## Army warns Turks of insurrection plot

Ankara, Jan 2.—In a warning seen by diplomats as hinting at a possible Army coup, military leaders said today that anarchists and separatists were preparing for a general uprising in Turkey.

"The developments in our region could turn into a flagrant conflict at any time," the armed forces commanders said in one of their sternest statements in years. The statement was signed by General Kenan Evren, chief of the general staff, and the commanders-in-chief of the Army, Navy, Air Force and gendarmerie.

The military chiefs called on bickering politicians to unite in overcoming the country's political and economic problems.

Mr Suleyman Demirel, the Prime Minister, clearly distressed after discussing the statement with President Fahri Koruturk, said: "We are now in a serious situation. But my Government has been in power for only 30 days, so obviously we cannot take responsibility for the problem."

Turkey has experienced a wave of political killings over the past two years—1,300 of them last year alone and about 200 since May. In the last two months, because the country has no money to pay for oil imports, most homes are without heating or hot water and cities are without light for up to nine hours a day. Many basic goods are unavailable.

The reference in the statement to anarchists meant the right and left-wing extremists who carry out vendetta street killings. The term, separatists, was the strongest reference to date to the Kurdish movement in eastern Turkey. There are at least 8 million Kurds in Turkey. Although it is 98 per cent Muslim, Turkey has been a secular state for more than 50 years.—Reuters.

Board meets: The full board of the British Steel Corporation will meet this morning for the first time since the breakdown of negotiations last week and the start of the steelworkers' strike. (Our Industrial Editor writes).

Board members, who include representatives of the unions in dispute who are expected to attend the meeting, will review the developments which led to the breakdown of talks, assess the impact of the strike on the corporation's operations and formulate policy in the light of yesterday's escalation of the dispute when the JSTC and the MTC received support from other TUC unions involved in the steel industry.

There is no prospect of the corporation making the first move to break the present impasse over its offer to the steel unions, although Sir Charles Tubb, the BSC chairman, has emphasised that he is ready to re-open negotiations at the earliest opportunity.

Sir Charles, who is keeping Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Industry, fully informed about developments, has said that the contingency arrangements made by the corporation in advance of the strike should enable BSC to "get by".

But both sides now appear reconciled to the stoppage lasting for weeks and the contingency arrangements will have to be reviewed since a prolonged stoppage will severely disrupt the corporation's cash flow and squeeze still further the corporation's finances.

The board is now faced with attempting to estimate the likely impact of the stoppage on its cash requirements from the Government against the background of the constraints placed on it by the Government's refusal of funding for operating losses beyond the end of March and the cash limit of 450m set for the next financial year.

Strike affects, page 2

The free market price of platinum was also a new record last month, a troy ounce \$334.60 up at \$331.45 (\$700) on December 27.

Encouraged by the trend copper cash wire bars gained £53 on the day to close at £1,047.50 per tonne and three-month futures gained £53 to £1,067.50 per tonne.

continued on page 13, col 5

## Shaih's Hollywood home burnt down

A mansion in Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, belonging to a Saudi Arabian, Shaih Muhammad al-Fassi, was severely damaged by a mysterious fire. The house, valued at \$7.5m (£3.5m), became one of Hollywood's more flamboyant unofficial tourist attractions after extensive redecoration by the Shaih.

Page 5

### Waldheim talks

Dr Kurt Waldheim, the United Nations Secretary-General, is entering 1980 in a state of confusion, marked by Anglo-French hostility and the prospect of a prolonged deadlock over the Community budget. The time is fast approaching when Mrs Thatcher will have to use the weapon of obstruction openly or risk having her bluff called by the other EEC leaders. Page 4

### Mr Begin wins vote

Mr Begin's coalition has closed ranks in the Knesset to reject motions of no-confidence tabled by four opposition parties against the cabinet's decision to extend its deadline for the evacuation of the outlawed Elon Moreh settlement in the West Bank of nationalist extremists. Page 5

Boat show: Sailors in fact and fantasy flock to Earls Court. Page 2  
Professions: How income and status declined. Page 3  
Rome: Cyclists greet start of Italian health service. Page 4  
Delhi: Survival of India's parliamentary democracy at issue in election. Page 4  
Geneva: Relief agencies slow down food aid to Kampuchea. Page 4

European News 2, 3 Features 8, 10  
Overseas News 4, 5 Letters 11, 15  
Appointments 12, 16 Obituary 12  
Archaeology 12, 16 Science 12  
Arts 12, 16 Snow reports 6, 7  
Books 12, 16 Sport 12, 16  
Business 13-15 TV & Radio 8, 9  
Cinema 12, 16 Travel 12, 16  
Crossword 12 Universities 12  
Diary 12 Weather 2  
Engagements 12 Wills 12



Photograph by Brian Harris

A three-inch scale model traction engine in steam outside the Wembley Conference Centre, London, where the 49th Model Engineer Exhibition was opened by the Duke of Gloucester yesterday.

## Guerrillas to demand ceasefire extension

From Frederick Cleary

Salisbury, Jan 2

Lord Soames, Governor of Southern Rhodesia, is to be asked for an extension of the ceasefire deadline, set at midnight on Friday. Mr Enos Nkala, a senior official of the Zanla, said today. He added, at a news briefing here, that when he meets Lord Soames tomorrow he would demand another six months.

The weakness of the dollar throughout the world reflects the increasing intensity and range of the crisis in which the United States is involved.

Despite worries about the national steel strike, sterling rose by more than 2 cents against the dollar to close at \$2.4220. Its effective exchange rate, which measures how its value moves against a basket of currencies, was unchanged, however, at 70.2 per cent of its 1971 value.

The European markets opened after a hectic night of activity in the Far East, where large-scale buying in Hong Kong pushed up the price from the \$530 recorded at the close of business on New Year's Eve in New York, the last trading of gold during 1979.

Fears over the implications of the crisis in Afghanistan and more technical worries about the results of the latest auction by the International Monetary Fund remained late last night.

In the traditionally nervous turn of the year market the price had to be marked up sharply to head off demand from buyers.

Other precious metals joined in the advance. Silver reached record highs at yesterday's bullion fixing, the spot price rising to £1,937.70p per Troy ounce, 346.85p up on Monday's price.

The next month, future price was £1,936.60p up at £1,937.70p.

In New London, Metal Exchange ring, cash silver closed 16p up at £1,935.50 and three months was 271p up at £1,742.50p.

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copper cash wire bars gained £53 on the day to close at £1,047.50 per tonne and three-month futures gained £53 to £1,067.50 per tonne.

continued on page 13, col 5

## New Ulster ombudsman withdraws

From Our Correspondent:

Belfast

Dr Robert Dickson, who was to have taken office on Tuesday as the new ombudsman and parliamentary commissioner for administration in Northern Ireland, has withdrawn his acceptance of the post.

In a letter to Mr Humphrey Atkins, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Dr Dickson said that having seen press comments he had decided not to proceed.

It was reported in a Belfast newspaper last week that a complaint of maladministration made against Dr Dickson in 1973 had been upheld by the ombudsman of the time. It related to his handling of a dispute at a primary school.

Mr Atkins, in a letter, accepted Dr Dickson's withdrawal and expressed regret.

The north-eastern education and library board has agreed to reinstate Dr Dickson as its chief officer.

## Writing check in murder hunt

Several hundred people living near the house in Selby Street, Hull, where three brothers died after it was set on fire five weeks ago, are to have their handwriting examined by the police.

The boy's mother, Mrs Edith Hause, received anonymous threatening letters before the

## Soviet gunships attack rebels as Mr Karmal pledges liberal regime

From Robert H. Reid

AP Correspondent

Kabul, Jan 2

Soviet troops were reportedly locked in bitter combat with Afghan rebels in the province of Samangan, north-west of Kabul, West European diplomatic sources said today.

The sources said casualties were reported to be heavy on both sides, and that the Russians were using sophisticated MiG-21 fighter-bombers against rebel strongholds.

There were also reports that the Soviet forces were fighting against regular Afghan Army units, but they could not be confirmed independently. Afghan officials were refusing to allow Western reporters outside Kabul and deported 13 journalists today.

In addition to the fighting in Bamian, under rebel control for several months, sources said the Russians had been involved in fighting north of Kabul in the western city of Herat, although the city was believed to be quiet today.

Asian and western diplomatic sources said the Soviet forces moved into Herat by air on the same day they struck in Kabul, launching the December 27 coup that installed Mr Babrak Karim in power.

Russian troops were flown on Monday to Jalalabad, across the border from Pakistan's Khyber Pass, to secure the strategic city, said an Afghan official who claimed to have taken part in the operation.

Mr Karmal, a former Ambassador to Czechoslovakia with close ties to the Kremlin, appeared on television last night for the first time since the coup.

There had been speculation that Mr Karmal, who had been living in Czechoslovakia after his recall was ordered in July, 1978, had not yet arrived in Afghanistan.

During a half-hour speech,

Mr Karmal denounced the late President Hafizullah Amin as a puppet of the United States and a Central Intelligence Agency agent, and pledged sweeping liberalization of Afghan life.

Introduced by a Muslim cleric, he also promised to "respect the sacred principles of Islam" in a gesture of conciliation to the Muslim rebels who have declared a "holy war" against the Marxist regime.

Mr Karmal's speech began with the opening lines of the Koran and included statements

of support for "the national, Islamic, anti-imperialist" revolution in neighbouring Iran.

Kabul newspapers appeared today for the first time since the coup, and carried photographs of Mr Karmal and his Cabinet ministers.

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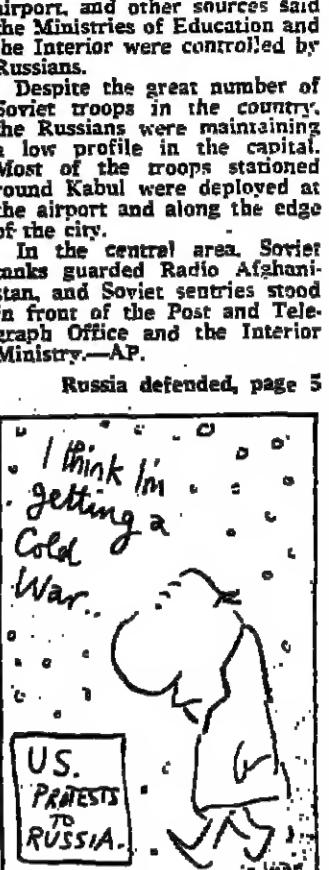
Despite the naming of the new ministers, it seemed that the Afghan Government was largely in Soviet hands. One West European diplomat said functionaries at the Foreign Ministry were merely showing up at their offices and not attempting to work.

Soviet civilians could be seen entering offices at Kabul airport, and other sources said the Ministries of Education and the Interior were controlled by Russians.

Despite the great number of Soviet troops in the country, the Russians were maintaining a low profile in the capital. Most of the troops stationed round Kabul were deployed at the airport and along the edge of the city.

In the central area, Soviet tanks guarded Radio Afghanistan in front of the Post and Telegraph Office and the Interior Ministry.—AP

Russia defended, page 5



## President and advisers consider US response

From David Cross

Washington, Jan 2

As President Carter met his top military and foreign policy advisers of the National Security Council

## STEEL STRIKE

**Large stocks cushion companies from immediate impact of strike by British Steel workers**

By Our Industrial Staff

British industry yesterday began to grapple with the difficulties created by the stopping of all steel production by members of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation and the National Union of Blast-furnace men employed by the British Steel Corporation.

Many companies are cushioned from an immediate impact by the high level of steel stocks, but industries are worried about the long-term effects of the stoppage.

The strike will cost British Steel an estimated £55m to £60m a week in wages and if prolonged will severely undermine the corporation's ability to hold its share of the home market. Some steel stockholders have set up an allocation system to prevent too rapid a rundown of stocks.

The strike is likely to increase the budgetary difficulties of the European Coal and Steel Community if it is long. The Community is already holding back on spending £3 million units of account (£28m) to help the restraining of redundant steel workers because Ministers have been unable to agree on how to raise the cash. A long strike would reduce its expected income from levies imposed on Community steel production.

Those have been set at 0.31 per cent of the average value of EEC coal and steel products and are due to yield 17 million units of account towards the Community's overall 1980 budget of £8 billion.

The strike also means that Britain will be unable to reach its production target under the Davyton anti-crisis plan for the industry of 5.28 million tonnes of crude steel in the present quarter.

The International Steel Trade Association, which represents about 100 companies in the industry, yesterday urged the Government to intervene in the strike.

Mr Tony Little, its chairman, said: "I think it is going to be a long strike, but the whole thing revolves round Sir Keith Joseph and Mrs Thatcher. Only they can sanction an increased pay settlement."

"It will be resolved only by increasing the pay offer. And that can be done only by someone in the Government giving the green light to British Steel

to give their workers another 2% per cent.

"The big source of steel apart from the mills, is the stockholders. If these are blacked out, the industry will be pretty quiet. If the unions were to black the stockholders—and there are a lot of them—there is quite a large reserve of production within the country," Mr Little said.

The British Constructional Steelwork Association said that steel fabrication companies would be forced to close and export orders would be badly hit if the strike was prolonged.

Steelworkers' Unions said that those most able to keep going for a maximum of six weeks with present supplies.

"Members have stocked up as much as possible. They will be looking in particular to steel stockholders for the bits and pieces they need to complete total orders," said Taylor Woodrow Group, which employs about 10,000 workers in the United Kingdom.

said that it had fairly substantial stocks of steel and expected "no major effects if the strike lasted a month or two."

John Laing and Son said that delays in the completion of contracts would be inevitable if the strike continued for a considerable time.

Ford of Britain, which imports more than half its steel, is among the companies which could be quickly and seriously disrupted when its steel stocks have been used.

The company is pinning its hopes on a low level of support outside the steel industry for the strikers.

It has assembly plants in the Irish Republic, Spain, Germany and Belgium, but the strike would have to last for several months before it needed to switch significantly larger number of new cars from those factories to the UK market.

One of the main and more short term difficulties facing the entire motor industry is the potential shortage of components from suppliers' factories.

Britain's process plant industry, whose contracts are often long term and valued at millions of pounds, is estimated to hold sufficient stocks of steel for about four weeks work. In

some cases, the stocks amount to two weeks.

But Mr Harry Hornsby, director-general of the Process Plant Association, said the industry was not particularly worried at this stage.

The National Coal Board will be affected as a supplier and as a customer. British Steel is the board's second largest customer, taking about eight million tons of premium-priced coking coal annually, valued at £220m.

NCB officials fear that industrial action by railwaymen will stop coal from reaching steel plants.

The NCB which buys steel direct from British Steel for use in mines and quarries, says it has six to eight weeks' supply.

British Shipbuilders, a heavy user of British Steel steel plate, said it had been steadily building up stocks since before Christmas. Its shipyards had stocks to last between two and three weeks.

The Institute of Directors last night condemned the strike as suicidal and called for steelworkers at individual mills to be given the chance to say what they thought of British Steel's offer.

Steel stockholding companies which remained largely unaffected by picketing yesterday have already begun rationing of steel supplies from their own extensive stocks.

The stockholders, who handle about 40 per cent of all steel deliveries to industry, have built up high levels of stocks in recent months and are optimistic that they will be able to maintain deliveries.

A spokesman for the National Association of Steel Stockholders said that companies would tend to maintain deliveries to their established customers.

Private sector steelmakers who account for about 25 per cent of United Kingdom steel production were able to work normally yesterday.

The steel unions are not in dispute with the British Independent Steel Producers' Association and the limited picketing of private sector works was peaceful. The Iron and Steel Trades Confederation has asked private steelmakers not to accept orders which otherwise would have gone to British Steel.

**Town braces itself for a recession**

From Tim Jones

Port Talbot

Port Talbot was yesterday a divided town, united by union loyalty. From 6 am Iron and Steel Trades Confederation pickets braved freezing temperatures to turn away the convoy of lorries which normally provide the giant works with the essentials to maintain production. The men who huddled around the blazing braziers appeared resigned to face a long and costly conflict which no side could win.

After a free-spending Christmas, the Port Talbot people have begun bracing themselves for a long-term recession which could end for ever the prosperous image of the town.

Men who normally gross more than £100 a week faced the prospect of living on a much-reduced social security income because the union does not pay strike benefit. But those on the picket line claimed they would rather see the whole of the national operation crippled for ever than accept the "insult of a 5 per cent pay offer."

Mr John Bamsey, who was against the strike when it was first called, said he was now firmly behind it. "BSC raised the money offer slightly in return for 6,000 more jobs lost, but kind of heartless bargaining leaves us with no choice. Many men who initially doubted the wisdom of the strike are now behind it."

On the picket line the men agreed that if the company offered a basic 10 per cent to bring the total deal up to 17 per cent, they would go back to work.

Other workers said they would go back for only two per cent in return for guarantees on jobs.

**£100m terminal is again paralysed**

From Our Correspondent

Glasgow

There was no picketing in Scotland yesterday because the steel industry, factories and shipyards were still officially on their new year holiday.

As expected, the ore-carrier Skua, which brought in 125,000 tonnes of Canadian ore to the BSC Hamilton steel terminal in the Firth of Clyde, was strike-bound there yesterday.

The ore-carrier, which is on charter to BSC, is expected to remain at Hunterston until the strike ends. This is the second time that the £100m terminal, a showpiece of the industry, has been paralysed by industrial action. It could not be put into service because of a six-month interim manning dispute which lost BSC £5.5m.

Now it is being blacked again by the Transport and General Workers' Union. The two railway unions are refusing to move essential raw material for steel-making to the Ravenscraig Steelworks at Motherwell, which apart from steel for safety and security, is unmanaged.

Mr G. Stewart, managing director of the Scottish division of BSC, described the strike as "a tragedy for Scotland".

**Union support firm in northern England**

By Ronald Kershaw

Throughout the north of England support for the nationalised strike was "solid" according to union and British Steel Confederation officials. Private steel producers in the Sheffield area were pickets but there were no cases where members of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation were prevented from entering private works.

In Sheffield Mr Ted Thorne, secretary of the south Yorkshire divisional strike committee, which includes Lincolnshire and the big BSC complex at Scunthorpe, said the principal task of the committee was to stop the movement of steel throughout the country.

Mr Thorne said the committee was particularly concerned about the movement of steel by road. He said: "Some stockholders have 18 weeks' supply of steel in hand, and for the past two or three weeks it has been moving in all directions. We are determined to stop it and we have had Transport and General Workers' Union members joining our men on the picket lines today."

All steelmaking in Sheffield has stopped and about 23,000 men are affected by the dispute. Some of those, however, have been allowed to enter works for security, safety or medical reasons, BSC said.

**Dockers are concerned about future of port**

From Our Correspondent

King's Lynn

Dockers unloaded a shipment of \$36 tonnes of Dutch steel from the British ship Kenix at King's Lynn, Norfolk, yesterday but said they would block attempts by foreign steelmakers to take advantage of the national steel strike.

Mr Roger Ward, a district official of the Transport and General Workers' Union, said: "There is no way we will handle extra cargoes. We support the steel men and will not undermine their strike."

About 400,000 tonnes of foreign steel a year are im-

ported through King's Lynn. Asked why the dockers agreed to unload the Dutch steel, Mr Ward said: "We shall continue to discharge the steel which has traditionally come in for regular customers."

Consignments of sheet and coil steel to the docks to go to a steel compound, but lorry drivers continued to deliver the imports to car-makers and other customers.

Mr Ward said: "I have called a meeting of all shop stewards next Monday. We may reduce cargoes. The dockers are concerned for the port's future."

From Our Correspondent

of the North-West Engineering Employers' Association said yesterday that the vulnerability of companies varied considerably.

At the Shorton steelworks on

Desside, where iron and steel-making is to be phased out by the end of March, with the loss of 6,400 jobs, production has stopped yesterday.

The blast furnace there could

resume production within 48 hours of the strike ending but the five open hearth furnaces are unlikely to be reopened

Picketers from the Iron and

Steel Trades Confederation and

the Transport and General Work-

ers' Union were at the plant from early yesterday and later the stoppage was made official for the plant's 2,500 TGWU members.

**North-west may not feel the bite for six weeks**

By R. W. Shakespeare

In spite of the heavy concentration of steel production in the North-west it is likely to be at least six weeks, and possibly three months, before any steel shortages are felt.

The early warning of possible strike action gave most engineering companies an opportunity to accumulate reserve stocks or arrange alternative sources of supply. Stockholders in the region also report that stocks are adequate to supply normal demand for "several months".

The Ford and Vauxhall car plants on Merseyside have increased their intake from traditional "second source" steel suppliers in the F.E.C.

Mr Maurice Burdon, director

of the North-West Engineering

Employers' Association, said

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## HOME NEWS

**The 1949 Cabinet papers-2: Suspicion about Communists verified**

By Peter Hennessy

Troubles on the waterfront plagued the Attlee Cabinet from the moment it took office in July, 1945. The Government sent troops into the docks to break strikes and move perishable cargoes in 1945, 1947 and 1948. There were dark hints of Communist manoeuvres behind the disorder in those ports.

The 1949 situation hardened into certainty. The Cabinet was convinced by events in Avonmouth, Liverpool and London docks that the Communist Party was attempting to thwart the country's economic recovery by disrupting the flow of trade.

The dispute was imported from Canada where the munitioned Seamen's Union was involved in a struggle with its rival, the Seafarers' International Union.

In May, 1949, British dockers were urged to support their Canadian comrades by refusing to unload vessels manned by members of the Seamen's Union who were on strike and also those manned by Seafarers' International members, who were not.

Mr Clement Attlee, the Prime Minister, was sufficiently perturbed to set up a Cabinet committee, GEN 291 under his chairmanship to work with the Cabinet's standing Emergencies Committee.

The Special Branch was kept busy tailing undesirables from Canada, the United States and the Netherlands who came to the United Kingdom to make matters worse.

Mr Isaac Isaacs, the Minister of Labour, told the first meeting of GEN 291 on May 23, in the language of the minutes:

"Mr Harry Davis, the president of the Canadian Seamen's Union (and a known Communist) had come to this country, and, while he has great care, he has been extremely active in stirring up trouble among British dockers, who were, in general, declining to unload Canadian ships whose crews were on strike."

By the end of May troops had been sent into Avonmouth under Defence Regulation 1304 to unload bananas from the Bayano and refrigerated food from the Trojan Star.

Mr Attlee, acting on the advice of Mr Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary, and the dominating figure in the Transport and General Workers' dockers' section in the inter-war years, said: "It would be absolutely disastrous to let the unions gain the power of deciding which ships should not be unloaded which should not."

The strike spread to Liverpool and London. At that point it became all too much for Mr Philip Noel-Baker, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations. In a memorandum for GEN 291, he expressed himself in language not normally found in documents of the Cabinet: "On July 4 he wrote:

"A few weeks ago the Communists succeeded in getting 12,000 British dockers to strike in support of

perishable cargoes. The Cabinet

was prepared if the need arose to draft 35,000 men to keep all the London docks open. In what had become a clear trial of strength the Government moved clandestinely and openly to ensure that its wrath ran against a powerful group of workers on unofficial strike.

The Canadian Seamen's Union. The dockers were led by Communists who believed in a vital trade union principle. . . When, after three weeks, the Minister of Labour, with the authority of the Government behind him, explained these facts to the dockers they saw at once that they had been duped by Communists and went straight back to work.

The Communists have now succeeded in getting another stoppage in the London docks. There are 8,000 stevedores and dockers and 78 ships are docked up. The Communists have led these men to believe that a vital trade union principle had been violated.

There is not a word of truth in these allegations: once again our good-hearted dockers have been duped by Communists and went straight back to work.

On June 13, GEN 291 agreed that the history of the dispute should be fully but discreetly investigated in order that the facts, when marshalled and placed on record, might be supplied to the Transport and General Workers' Union, a prominent member of which should be invited by means of a broadcast to educate the rank and file on the way in which they had been misled and exploited".

On July 7 troops moved into the London docks to release

the Canadian Seamen's Union. The dockers were led by Communists who believed in a vital trade union principle.

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## WEST EUROPE

## Signs point to prolonged budget deadlock as EEC enters 1980s in state of confusion

From Michael Hornsby  
Brussels, Jan 2

The constitutional struggle between the European Parliament and EEC member states over the size and composition of the Community's budget for 1980, and Britain's related battle to cut its £1,000m net contribution, are likely to dominate the new year as they did the end of the old.

The Irish, as they vacate the chair of the Council of Ministers after their six-month tour of duty, leave the Community in a greater state of confusion than that in which they found it, and the precarious Italian Government which now assumes the Council's presidency scarcely looks in better shape to exercise firm stewardship.

Antagonism between France and Britain, never far below the surface, seems certain to run like a thread through the arguments ahead, whether over the budget, fish, energy or lamb. Officially inspired reports in the French press are suggesting already that if Britain dislikes the EEC's group rules, it should get out or accept some kind of association status.

The strongest card in Mrs Thatcher's hand is the knowledge that no legal machinery exists for expelling a refractory or recalcitrant member. The time is fast approaching, however, when she will have to decide whether to use the weapon of obstructionism openly or risk exposure as a

fake Boadicea with only paper knives on her chariot wheels.

One of the first tasks of Signor Francesco Cossiga, the Italian Prime Minister, will be to decide when to hold the next summit meeting of EEC heads of government, at which Mrs Thatcher has promised to give the rest of the Community "one last chance" to redress Britain's budgetary imbalance.

At the last meeting in Dublin, Mrs Thatcher extracted a vaguely worded promise from her colleagues that the next summit, not due until the end of March, would be brought forward to a date in February with the aim of resolving the budget dispute.

The European Commission, under its president, Mr Roy Jenkins, has been entrusted by the heads of government with the preparation of proposals for increasing the level of Britain's receipts from the budget, which on a per capita basis are at present only half the Community average.

These proposals would aim to supplement the refund of up to £250m on Britain's gross contribution to the budget, which Mrs Thatcher was offered initially at Dublin but which she rejected as inadequate by itself as a "full and final settlement" of the British claim.

One way of meeting Mrs Thatcher's demands would be simply to write into the budget a special credit line to be used to finance agreed projects in Britain—most probably in the transport sector, such as new

roads and the Channel tunnel—that could be represented plausibly as being of benefit to the Community as a whole.

There are two main difficulties with this approach. The first is that Mr Thatcher wants Britain's budget deficit reversed within the next financial year—in other words, by April, 1981. The second is that, as a big contributor to EEC budget revenue, the net financial relief the Government would derive from any new spending projects in Britain would be small unless they were of colossal size.

The situation has been complicated by the European Parliament's decision last month to throw out the 1980 draft budget. As a result, the EEC is principally prohibited from spending more money this year than last, unless a new draft has been drawn up and adopted by the Parliament.

The British Conservatives in Strasbourg, whose vote was crucial in ensuring the two-thirds majority needed for budget rejection, believed they were making Mrs Thatcher's task easier by their action. A new budget could be drawn up, they argued, that would both curb agricultural spending and give Britain the help it required.

But the Community seldom works as neatly or logically as that. It is true that the predominance of agricultural spending in the budget, from which Britain gains little, is the main cause of Mrs Thatcher's

difficulties. But restraints on farm spending, though welcome and necessary, could produce results on the scale required only over a number of years.

In any case, the French and other "hawks" in the Council of Ministers, who think the European Parliament needs to be taught a sharp lesson, will do their utmost to postpone any concessions to the assembly for as long as possible—certainly until after the EEC spring farm price settlement, when some curbs on farm spending will probably be agreed.

The main French aim is to preserve the primacy of Agriculture Ministers in determining the level of expenditure on farm price support, and they do not want to be shackled by voter commitments given to the Parliament. Nor will there be any immediate financial pressure to agree on a new budget, since the Community is unlikely to operate adequately on last year's for up to six months.

All this points to a fairly prolonged deadlock. That in turn will be a heaven-sent pretext for the French and the Danes, who think Mrs Thatcher has been offered too much already, to argue that so long as the Community is limited to last year's expenditure there can be no question of special new measures to help Britain.

At that point, unless she is really prepared to play as rough as she pretends, Mrs Thatcher's bluff will be in danger of being called.

## Earthquake leaves Azores town in ruins

From Richard Wigg  
Angra do Heroismo, Azores, Jan 2

Most of this town of 17,000 people lay in ruins today, shattered by an earthquake in which according to American military estimates, killed at least 50 people. President Eanes of Portugal flew to Terceira island today to survey the damage caused by the strongest earthquake to hit these Atlantic islands for 20 years.

Official Portuguese figures put the confirmed death toll at 33, including seven children. But United States Air Force officers at Lajes, 20 miles from Angra do Heroismo, reported to Washington that more than 50 people had died and about 400 were injured.

The Portuguese Government declared three days of national mourning for the earthquake victims. Angra do Heroismo, the world-his town, is the capital of Terceira, which has 90,000 people and is the second most populous island in the Archipelago.

According to the Portuguese news agency ANO, the nearby islands of Graciosa and São Jorge were also badly affected. Many of the homeless sheltered during the night in tents provided by the Portuguese armed forces. The Air Force was serving them hot meals today. United States officials in Lisbon said the 1,600 American servicemen at the Lajes base were assisting the wounded

## OVERSEAS

## Survival of India's parliamentary rule at issue in election

From Richard Wigg  
Delhi, Jan 2

Polling begins tomorrow in the first batch of 226 constituencies in India's seventh general election. The outcome is likely to have serious consequences for the survival of the country's parliamentary system of government.

That is why the lacklustre election campaign has been no guide to the importance of the election, wanted this time only by India's political class headed by President Sanjiva Reddy.

The results will begin to be known only after the second batch of 299 constituencies have voted on Sunday. Bad weather is one of the many reasons why turnout is expected to be low.

It would be a mistake to ascribe too much in this election to regional considerations. Nor only have the leading politicians offered the people no real debate; they have all exploited India's deep-rooted caste pull, as in no previous general election. Muslims and Hindus, moreover, still feel overwhelmingly their religious identity and vote accordingly.

"Holy men," such as one in Mrs Gandhi's own constituency, are courted by politicians for the vote of their spiritual followers. The one in Rae Bareilly is pro-Janata.

Party-political opinion polls are still in their infancy in a country as diverse and impoverished as India. Two young academics from Delhi's School of Economics in one attempt at a scientific study of electoral behaviour ended up acknowledging the many emotional factors determining voting patterns.

The Times of India emphasized earlier this week that Indian voters do not hold firm political convictions. The typical voter does not want to be isolated from his surrounding society or to displease influential personalities who are standing.

A few days back there was a striking example of this in Delhi when Mrs Gandhi went to record her party's last political broadcast on all India Radio and Television studios. Almost the entire staff lined up afterwards to make their obeisance.

Among the mass of poor rural voters who are the largest single social group going to the polls, immediate economic considerations often dictate how they cast their vote. This is not to say that many do not go surprisingly clearly to the broad situation in their part of India.

It can only be hoped that the results of the poll, realistically estimated to cost one of the world's poorest nations at least 1,200m rupees (about £57m), will with the direct share of the Exchequer admitted to be half that tremendous sum—will justify the President's personal decision to hold a mid-term poll as the only way out.

India's real problems for the 1980s have been wholly neglected, anyway, by the chief contenders. Fairness to the Indian electorate demands underlining the severe limitations imposed on them by man and one woman all over 60.

Mrs Gandhi's strength in this poll is made up basically of two factors. There is the disillusionment with Janata, evidently felt by urban elites as well as India's many illiterate but nor unsophisticated villagers.

Secondly, something much, much older is benefiting her. The idea of a "contract" be-

## Rome takes up case of Brazilian theologian

From Patrick Knight  
São Paulo, Jan 2

The work of the Brazilian theologian, Father Leonardo Boff, has come under the scrutiny of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Father Boff, a 41-year-old Franciscan and author of 25 books, is Brazil's leading exponent of the "theory of liberation". This theory has encouraged a great number of Brazilian priests and a proportion of the bishops as well, to concentrate their work on the underprivileged, notably the slum dwellers in the large cities, industrial workers, landless peasants and squatters, and the Indians.

The matter of Father Boff's work was first raised in 1975.

At that time, the Archbishop of São Paulo, Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns, the former teacher of Father Boff, went to the Vatican to discuss his work with members of the Congregation.

That too is being severely tested.

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Somewhat better off or more interested voters have been detected in the villages now used to vote as a group.

The Election Commission has debarred for the first time the customary setting up of heavily coloured "shanties" (tents) by the rival parties in front of the booths to influence the voters to vote.

Mrs Gandhi and Mr Ramachandran are the two pivotal figures, as ready to desert allies for power and espouse contradictory allegiances after the voters have had their fragile say, as Mr Charan Singh was last summer in order to get to the Prime Minister's chair.

If Father Boff's case comes to a climax, the theologian at least can count on the support of at least two of Brazil's six cardinals: Cardinal Arns and the Archbishop of Fortaleza, Cardinal Aloisio Longareto. Three others are likely to be neutral, and only the Archbishop of Porto Alegre, Cardinal Vicente Scherer, has criticized Father Boff's views.

## A World View: Arrigo Levi says governmental failure has paralleled economic gains

### Looming political crisis in Italy casts shadow on Europe

Everything points to another Italian government crisis in the early weeks of the new year. This is unpleasant news for Europe, Italy being the chairman of the Community at the present very critical stage.

When, at the Dublin summit meeting, Signor Francesco Cossiga, a sensible and likable man, was charged in extremis by his colleagues to find a solution for the British crisis before the next meeting of the European Council, Mrs Thatcher asked him: "Do you feel you can do it?" Signor Cossiga answered: "I do not feel I can do it. I feel I must do it, for the sake of Europe." Nobody doubts that he is going to do his best; but will he be there to do it?

That Italy will soon find itself once more without a government, and Europe without a President, is considered in Rome almost a certainty by everybody concerned—including Signor Cossiga. This will be very bad for Europe: Italy being the chairman of the Community at the present very critical stage.

During the last four years, the growth of Italian exports has been the highest in the Western world, including Japan. Finally, the global deficit of the public sector has diminished in 1979, in real terms, by almost 30 per cent.

For all these reasons, the lira remains stable, in spite of an inflationary rate which is twice the OECD average. Even the energy problem is solvable. Although government mismanagement and scandals make it difficult for Italy to find at present all the oil it needs, it will have no problem in paying for it, in spite of increased



Signor Cossiga: May be reduced to a caretaker Prime Minister.

prices. Italy's net oil deficit represented only 19 per cent in 1978 and less than 15 per cent in 1979, in spite of its total lack of energy resources. Italy has adapted well to the post-1973 situation. It has rebuilt its monetary reserves and found a new economic equilibrium with the rest of the world. In 1979, even profits were good for private firms of all sizes.

Unfortunately, the Italians have been much less successful in their political life. Their society never produced a last-

ing "historical compromise" between right and left, like other democracies have had for many generations, allowing political parties to alternate in power, or to join in a national coalition in an emergency. The lack of alternation has weakened the old Christian Democratic majority. But no new majority has appeared.

The gap between Christian Democrats and Communists (PCI) was reduced to only four percentage points in the 1976 elections. It has widened again to eight points in the 1979 elections, but the Socialists' refusal to join in a government coalition not including the Communists still makes it impossible for a renewed centre-left majority government to come into existence.

There is apparently no way out of the present situation. The Communists can no longer support a government without joining it (as they did in recent years), because their party would be fatally weakened. But the Christian Democrats cannot accept them as full government partners, because they would face an equally fatal split. So, until the electorate will again give somebody a clear parliamentary majority, Italy will be ruled by a rump Janata-style coalition and weak minority governments.

What Italian political scientists have called "the K factor" (K for "Komunist"), alluding to the Russian ties of the Italian Communist Party, keeps making Italy almost ungovernable. Unfortunately, as the former President Saragat remarked recently: "The evolution of the PCI towards the West has stopped. One feels instead that there is a slow rapprochement to the Soviet Union."

The fact that the leaders of the PCI, who are on the whole a very decent lot, are unwilling to make an unequivocal Western choice, proves that the "K factor" has very deep roots in Italy.

The continuing vitality of the economy has not yet reduced the social and political tensions that make Italy the most ungovernable of western democracies. Italy's political ills will take long to be cured. All Italians, including Communists, are convinced that this can be done, and that the Italian democracy will survive, only if we have a strong European Com-

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## AFGHANISTAN

## Soviet move defended by religious leader

From Michael Binyon

Moscow, Jan 2

Attempting to ward off hostile reactions in the Muslim world, the Russians claimed today that their intervention in Afghanistan had saved Islam from profanation here.

The official Tass news agency today quoted a statement by Mr Abdul Aziz Sadig, chairman of the Council of Ulema (religious elders) in Afghanistan, praising the Russians as a "reliable barrier against imperialist aggressors" and saying that Muslims throughout the country welcomed Soviet assistance.

It is not clear how long Mr Sadig has occupied his senior position, but in an interview with two Tass correspondents he said the council had received many letters and telegrams from "honest Muslims" and prominent clergy in various provinces supporting the new Government.

Echoing Moscow's justification for intervention, already given in the Soviet press, Mr Sadig said Muslims welcomed the Russian assistance given in accord with the United Nations Charter and the 1978 Soviet-Afghan treaty of friendship.

All Afghans, Muslims, our entire people, resolutely reject the brazen and unprecedented malicious attacks of imperialism and their accomplices on our friendship with the Soviet Union", Mr Sadig was reported as saying.

He said he could not but feel profound indignation over attempts that certain circles in the West, especially in the United States, were making to interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs.

All Afghan Muslims, he said, rejoiced at the removal of President Amin's tyranny that served as a tool in the plans of American imperialism.

The entire country was determined to follow the course of the April revolution and create a new, proud, free and independent Afghanistan. But precisely at the period of great rebirth, imperialism (Soviet terminology for the West) was launching a massive propaganda attack on Afghanistan on the hypocritical pretext of protecting the independence of an Islamic country.

Mr Sadig said it was the same that backed the bloody dictatorship of the Shah, and it was America that threatened Islamic states and had actively encouraged for the past 18 months "piratic actions" against Afghanistan.

The Russians today briefly reported the seizure of the Afghan Embassy in Delhi, saying that it was the action of a crowd of raging Afghans.

That said this provocative "word" showed that the measures taken by the local authorities to ensure the inviolability of the Embassy and safety of the diplomatic personnel were "clearly insufficient".

Tass said yesterday that the demonstration at the Soviet Embassy in Tehran was the action of "hooligans". The Russians have not condemned the Tehran students holding American hostages in such terms.

Mr Babak Karmal, the new Afghan leader who appeared for the first time on Afghan television yesterday, said statements by President Carter on Afghanistan constituted interference in the country's internal affairs.

In an oblique reference to condemnation by neighbouring states, he said, according to Tass, that statements from other imperialist forces and "reaction in the region" had much in common with President Carter's remarks.

He emphasized at a joint meeting of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party and the Revolutionary Council and Government that the "friendly relations" between the Afghan and Soviet people, and added that his country's main task now was the defence of the revolution against counter-revolution and imperialist interference.



Afghan students shout anti-Russian slogans from their country's embassy in Delhi, which they occupied.

## Students seize Afghan Embassy

Delhi, Jan 2.—Angry Afghan

students seized their country's

embassy in Delhi today in

protest against the Soviet

invasion of Afghanistan and

held embassy staff captive for

six hours.

The students alleged that the

military attaché, Colonel

Tawfiq Boisse, fired at them

when they entered his room.

Colonel Boisse, who was

among three diplomats held by

the students told them he did

not mean to fire but the revolver went off accidentally when he slipped.

The students, including

several girls, shouted anti-

communist and anti-Soviet

slogans, hung banners denouncing

Soviet armed intervention

in their country and scrawled

in their country (our home)

responded with the students.

The students seized the embassy

and held it for several hours

before the Indian Foreign Office

negotiated the release of the diplomatic staff

and the students left the embassy voluntarily.

On the front wall of the

embassy students strung a banner

saying: "Tarakli, then

Amin and now Babak Karmal—all birds of the same feather."

Bloody Russia go out of

Afghanistan", was painted

prominently over the front door.

The students issued a statement

calling upon all Islamic

and other governments to condemn the "barbaric invasion of

Afghanistan by Russia".

The statement said: "Russians are only deceiving themselves into believing that they can hoodwink the world with their false propaganda of having intervened in Afghanistan in order to fight foreign aggression."

There are nearly 400 Afghan

students in India. About 200 of

them bashed stones at the

building made no attempt to

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Cardinal Hume's agenda for thought and action in this decade

**Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, on the Christian rule of the 1980s.**

Just before Christmas hundreds of children sang carols by torchlight outside Buckingham Palace in the presence of the Queen. The International Year of the Child was drawing to an emotional end. As the torches went out, one could be forgiven for wondering if perhaps the hopes and expectations of these young people would not soon be extinguished as well. And not only theirs but those of millions of their contemporaries in every part of the world.

What kind of world, what sort of society are the young to inherit from us in this new decade? There will, of course, be the good things that can never be completely lost. There will still be laughter, love, beauty, the delights of the created world, the discovery of truth, the search for God.

But there are alarming things which already cast their shadow over this decade. We have grown accustomed in the Seventies to the proliferation of nuclear arms, to the persistence of the world hunger and to the tragedy of the situation in Northern Ireland. I am convinced that Christians have a distinctive contribution to make towards the solution of these and similar problems. I want to suggest an agenda for reflection and action in the 1980s.

It is important that we do not lose our sense of reality about the possibility of a nuclear holocaust. The threat of extinction may not seem as urgent and terrifying as it was in the years immediately after the Second World War. Yet today the proliferation of nuclear weapons is a nightmare. Our commitment to the nuclear deterrent creates the immediate possibility of a conflict with the conventional Christian teaching about the right of the innocent to live.

There are, of course, occasions when self-defence may rightly use force against those unjustly attacking them. But the right of self-defence is not unlimited. The Second Vatican Council categorically declared that every warlike act directed to the indiscriminate destruction of whole cities or large areas within their inhabitants is "a crime against God and man". The reason

for this condemnation is that such acts, because indiscriminate, inevitably involve direct killing of innocent inhabitants.

Far from calmly accepting that we have a moral right to use such weapons, the Christian conscience should really be wrestling with a more complex problem. If it is wrong to unleash such weapons against civilian targets, can it be morally defensible to threaten to do so even against an unjust aggressor? Can we, in fact, base our defence policy on such threats?

It is a strange logic which justifies vast expenditure on weapons of destruction while tolerating, according to one estimate, that 800 million people should live in a state of absolute poverty. The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) has recently reminded us that 10 million of the world's young children are suffering from severe protein-energy malnutrition and another 200 million are inadequately fed. Hunger and disease on this scale are tragic and scandalous. Much has been done to improve standards of health and education in the developing world in the last three decades.

Much more could be done if wealthy nations were each to contribute 10 per cent of their defence budgets to development and embarked on imaginative and large-scale plans for investment in the developing countries. Politicians who understand what needs to be done feel powerless in face of public indifference or apathy. Again we need deeper and more widespread reflection on the consequences of human dignity and human rights and the development of a sense that as a nation and as individuals we are at one with the whole human race.

Can we dare to hope that the conflict in Northern Ireland shall, in this next decade, be finally resolved? The strong plea made by Pope John Paul II at Drogheda for an end to violence and for a political solution is beginning, three months later to sound somewhat hollow. The Pope's initiative has been neutralized to a large extent because of a tendency to listen selectively.

The modest political initiative now being proposed is an indication of goodwill by the present Government and may yet prove to be a positive, if limited, step forward. What is disappointing is that most people seem deadlocked in suspicion, fear and



**Cardinal Hume:  
religious divisions  
are a scandal**

hatred which are in origin as much political and national as religious. Christians have to rededicate themselves to a programme of prayer and forgiveness. Now is the time to demonstrate that the enthusiasm which greeted Pope John Paul in October is capable of achieving justice and peace in Northern Ireland.

I am conscious that many will object: are the Churches right to concern themselves with issues such as these? Are they right to speak so strongly about justice and peace and about human rights? Should they not focus instead on the world to come? To this I would reply that there are, in fact, few areas of human activity in which moral principles do not play some part, and which can be isolated from an overall view of

the purpose and ultimate destiny of the human person. Many political decisions and policies are based consciously or unconsciously on moral choices and value judgments. These need to be carefully evaluated.

In these questions, it is not easy for a Christian, or any religious person for that matter, to "keep God out of it". Indeed there is always danger in attempts to build the city of man outside the kingdom of God.

It can also be objected that if Christians are indeed to help to build a new city of man they should first put their own house in order. The point is taken. Christians who are divided from each other are in a poor position from which to preach peace and reconciliation to an unimpressed world. Religious divisions are a scandal. This decade may be hard going as we strive for Christian unity. We may have to live through that state of spiritual purgation and growth which is known as "the dark night of the soul". It is a darkness which precedes a new dawn. It is often like this where the things of God are concerned. Sound doctrine, then, does matter.

Recent controversy concerning prominent theologians in the Roman Catholic Church has reminded many of us of some winds blowing about the future of ecumenical dialogue. We have a problem: how do we reconcile the right and duty of the theologian to pursue his researches in academic freedom with the limitations of the human mind to discover truths about God which lie always beyond its competence?

The responsibility of the teaching authority within the Church to safeguard the authentic teaching of the Christian gospel has to be maintained: at the same time the duty of the theologian to speculate has to be asserted. From time to time, the two will clash; better this than indifference and apathy. It is legitimate to argue over whether it is better for all concerned that investigations into a theologian's orthodoxy should be conducted in secrecy or publicly. There are strong arguments for each practice. Theologians and the Sacred Congregation need not be in conflict. Both are needed to ensure that, on the one hand, fundamental truths are protected and, on the other, that the academic freedom of the theologian be recognized to pursue his studies according to the best principles

of scholarly integrity. The cooperation of both is the best guarantor of a living faith within the Church and is our indispensable contribution to the ecumenical dialogue. The pilgrim Church needs some infallible signs.

Looking forward into the next decade, would it be naive to claim that the Christian community offers still a realistic alternative to the fading certainties of our materialist and pleasure-seeking society? It is too easily forgotten that one of the forces which still gives coherence and unity to our nation is our Christian faith. Despite the fact that we are now a pluralistic society, over 75 per cent of our people claim to be Christian. Most no longer see their religious faith as influencing secular activities. None the less this residual belief, coupled with people's continuing hunger for God and the things of the spirit, points to a way ahead. It suggests where people may find a vision and purpose for the future.

For Christians, the belief that God becomes man in Jesus Christ is the decisive event of human history. If God becomes man, then man's view of God is radically changed and his view of himself equally so. Human nature is transformed. Men and women become images of the divine.

Belief in man's divine dignity provides an almost impossible programme for political and social reform. It creates an inescapable obligation to defend and foster all human life from conception to the grave. It pursues people first.

This is no plea for a theocratic state, but a suggestion of where to discover the spring of political motivation for the future. The Good News of the Gospel is not devalued by past failures to build a Christian society. Nor is it proved false by Churchmen who have not always revealed the face of Christ in their attitudes and actions. Great things have been entrusted into frail hands, as every priest and bishop knows.

The remark of G. K. Chesterton is very much to the point: the trouble is not that Christianity has been tried and found wanting; it has not been wanted and never tried. Perhaps we shall start to try in earnest during the Eighties. Then the children of today will be able to carry the lighted torches of hope into the Nineties and far beyond.

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**Bernard Levin**

## Perfectly porky

**My hopes are high  
for this greatest  
of the world's arts**

held a permanent place in the repertoires of all the world's opera-houses? You say *Peter Grimes*? You err; mighty work though it is, there is many a leading house that has never done it. *Capriccio*? No; even Covent Garden has never staged the work on its own account (though it has been seen in guest visits) despite all the Straussian Solti's years there. (More remarkable still, Sir George has never yet conducted it anywhere.)

No: the almost incredible answer is *Turandot*, which was first performed in 1926. It is related that Toscanini, who was conducting, laid down his baton at the point, in the final duet, at which Puccini had died (the now familiar conjugal ending by Alfano was performed only later), turned to the audience in tears, and said: "This is where the Master stopped". Little did he know that it was also where opera stopped.

In the half-century that has elapsed since the premiere of *Turandot*, many new operas have been performed, even widely (and rightly) performed, out of respect; none has achieved and maintained its place in the regular and repeated work in the world's opera-houses out of love. And what you consider that that half-century has included all the operatic works of Britten, Walton, Tippett, Shostakovich and Hindemith to say nothing of the principal works of Busoni and Stravinsky (*The Rake's Progress* is the nearest thing to a candidate for the succession to *Turandot*), and for that matter *Arabella* and *Die Fledermaus* Schikaneder (also *Schwanze* the Bagpiper), though my own view of that work is that it is a bore of almost Revellesque proportions, you can readily see that something has gone very seriously wrong.

Please note that I am not saying that no good, even though no great, opera has been written in the past 50 years. I am saying that the habit of writing operas which create the habit of listening to them appears to have been lost, and that if it has been lost it had better be recaptured, or opera is doomed. Every now and again hopes have been raised. By Britten, obviously; in my view by Richard Rodney Bennett, whose *Victory* seemed to me to deserve more than the handful of performances it received in one season; only to vanish utterly thereafter; in my view not by Henze; by Shostakovich's *Katerina Ismailova*; by a handful of others. But I suspect that for an opera-composer to fight his way into the hearts of opera-lovers, he needs more than musical and dramatic ability; he needs regular and frequent production and performance, and the economics of operas are such that the really prolific composer of operas must be extinct, for what is the point of writing as many of the things as Donizetti, if you are going to get only three of them performed, and those not above four times?

And yet I am always unwilling to accept economics as an explanation of the lack of genius. When the world finds another Mozart, another Verdi, another Puccini, the opera-house doors, I believe, will fly open, and stay open; and I mean both the stage-door through which they will pass, and the box-office door through which the audiences will press. Well, Mozarts do not grow upon trees, and very remarkable trees those trees would be which bore such fruit. But tonight, a Richard Blackford flower, at the Roundhouse, and my hopes are high not only for him but for this greatest and most enriching of the world's arts.

**Philip Howard**

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## Wanted: more responsive politics

Ronald Butt

Less than a decade ago, it was fashionable to explain (or to explain away) Britain's difficulties mechanically. We were likened by the political diagnosticians to a good old-fashioned business in which the intrinsic virtues of energy, rectitude, craftsmanship, pride, responsibility and competence survived intrinsically intact, but which was bedevilled, through no fault of its own, by out-of-date plant and equipment.

That was also, of course, a common explanation for the shortcomings of our industry, which, most unfairly, had not been blamed into condition in which re-equipping was unavoidable. It is not, however, to our industrial problems that I am referring now, but rather to the mechanistic view of our socio-political condition which assumed that there was nothing wrong with us as a nation, but only a great deal wrong with our institutions.

Everything (well, most things) could be put right by institutional reforms of parliamentary procedure, of the franchise and of proportional voting by the reform of the Civil Service (but I do not notice much improvement in our condition after the post-Fulton changes); of economic techniques by new planning mechanisms (big and little Ned).

Everything (well, most things) could be put right by institutional reforms of parliamentary procedure, of the franchise and of proportional voting by the reform of the Civil Service (but I do not notice much improvement in our condition after the post-Fulton changes); of economic techniques by new planning mechanisms (big and little Ned).

dies: bodies for regulating prices and wages); by a Bill of Rights; by devolution (only it turned out that the Scots and Welsh didn't really want it); by new structures for local government and the health service (about the consequences of which it is better not to speak).

Well, we have tried many of these reforms. Yet we begin the Eighties not better but worse in our present and prospective condition, and not noticeably full of hope. To some considerable extent, of course, our problems are shared with the rest of the world, particularly those that arise from the impact on industrial economies everywhere of the oil crisis, which we are by courtesy of the North Sea, actually better placed than our competitors to surmount.

Even so, the sinister combination of inflation and recession afflicts us much worse than it does most similar nations. We have gone down in the world and we are less able, or so it seems, to sustain the blows that have been raining on the West by the controllers of the world's oil wells.

We do not, therefore, enter the Eighties with great confidence, but fortunately there is less inaction than there was to look for instant institutional cures. The fault, we seem dimly

to recognize, lies more in ourselves than in our structures of government. This does not mean that there is nothing to be done to improve our methods of government, nor should it suggest to anyone that there is some other basic flaw that we can identify and mend.

Still, it will be something if, at the start of the Eighties, we can recognize the dangers of over-simplification, and the risks of reducing everything to an overwhelming question that assumes an overwhelming answer to be lying just round the corner of our thinking. We can analyse how nations rise and fall, but in the end, our analysis never tell us precisely

that we do not know how great Elizabethan England would have been without Elizabeth and the singular group of ministers who served her; we do not know how far the spirit of that age called forth effective governors, or how far the governors made the spirit of the age. We do not know what, if any, relationship there was between the genius of Shake-

peare and the energy of the explorers, and the success of the often beleaguered Elizabethan government.

We do not know what connection there is between the artistic barrenness of our own age and our political failure. We may well think there is some— and at least we are not insignificant in terms of adventure. Our own time, after all, has seen the first man (even if he was not a Briton) step on to the moon, although, curiously, the year in which that happened comes less readily to our minds than that in which Columbus discovered America.

There is, however, one thing that we do know—and that is that there is a close connection between a nation's opinion of itself, and its success in the world, in much the same way as there is with an individual. A nation which does not think much of itself will not get very far and we have been so well schooled in recent years not to think too much of ourselves, our past and our institutions,

problems of the nation. Mrs Thatcher and her colleagues are losing lost confidence.

How much of a role the politicians should have in giving the nation a good opinion of itself is a matter for argument, but they have at least a part of some significance to play. Yet it is not easy, for even those with the best intentions to give something to which the nation can respond when they themselves are subject to opinion-forming pressures which create a kind of orthodoxy against which they cannot give the leadership to which the nation might respond with our risk of ridicule.

To risk a simplified statement of what is chiefly wrong with Britain, it is that government is not where it appears to be—and therefore, people have less and less faith in the efficacy of those who are supposed to govern. Governments come in saying that they will do one thing, and are often forced to do another—not because circumstances have changed, but because they have become prisoners of the prevailing orthodoxies, which have the places of command in Whitehall, in the pressure groups, and in the opinion-forming media.

In their attempt to deal with the economic and industrial

investigation of the finances of the Carter family peanut warehouses is going too far in trivializing the metaphor and being beastly to the President. But he commands *Goldingate* as journalistic shorthand for the uproar over the activities of Harrison Goldin, the Comptroller of New York City. The temptation to build new gates must be resisted, unless, as in *Goldingate*, there is an irresistible pun, or rhyme, or similarly witty grandather *Watergate*.

Otherwise, where is it all going to end? Will the committee be as indiscriminate in its use of syllables.

Soon after the discovery of new and industrially promising superconducting alloys, an enterprising American set up business to manufacture these materials, and called his firm "Supercon". A French professor of engineering saw this arresting letterhead, grabbed it, asked for any further copies lying around, and carried them to France to amuse his colleagues. The firm has folded up, but there is a collector's item.

Philip Howard

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## Shut the gate, before any more get out

continuing our series of new words and new meanings

*Watertage* has been in the English language for five centuries, meaning anything from such an entrance to Thomas' Tower in the Tower of London to the act of urinating, or, as we still say, if we are feeling prim, passing water. Since the plumbers section of the Nixon White House decided to pay an uninvited call on the campaign headquarters of the Democratic Party's national Committee in 1972, *Watertage* has acquired a

powerful new meaning as shorthand for political scandal and cover-up.

The British National Coal Board staff and miners' pension funds have just bought half-interest in the famous building in Foggy Bottom. They have got themselves a share not just in the most improbable new cliché in the English language.

*Watertage* was such a sensational piece of skulduggery and the press played so important a part in exposing it, that we journalists have been unable to resist continuously recycling the

metaphor. Gate as a useful suffix to indicate the latest political party games has become so popular that it is in a semantic *Gategate* situation.

It has proved so useful a piece of journalese that it has pupped a litter of derivatives, not all of them apt. One is *watergate*, used as shorthand for the satanic-baiting by the oil companies in Rhodesia. *Mudgate* was used to refer to the South African information scandal that also unmade a president. When the shippers of Bordeaux were caught with their

great feet on the scales, their traditional method of trading was happily labelled *Winegate*. There was a less happy example of a *Samogate* to describe doubtful political shenanigans (and some about which there could be no possible doubt whatever) in the Central Park.

William Safire, the witty American political journalist and wordsmith, helped to popularize *Koreagate* and coined *Lancetgate* as descriptions of two recent Washington scandals. He judges that

manufactures baby-food and other dairy products, have to change its name because to most of us "Cow & Gate" will have come to suggest hushed-up dirty work connected with somebody called "Coward", and other such nastiness that no baby would like to find in its milk?

There is nothing in English for which one cannot find a precedent. There is nothing new in taking a syllable out of a word and endowing it with an entirely original meaning. It worked with bus. But there is danger in such indiscriminate use of syllables.

Soon after the discovery of new and industrially promising superconducting alloys, an enterprising American set up business to manufacture these materials, and called his firm "Supercon".

A French professor of engineering saw this

intriguing title of "Paul's People". I wonder whether it will include reference to the group of squatters who are currently occupying the Deanery—they would certainly seem to qualify.

There were fears last week

that both James Conroy-Ward, who plays Major-General Stanley, and his understudy, Alastair Donkin, might be unable to appear in the centenary performances because of sore throats.

John Reed, who retired last summer after 28 years as the principal comic singer with the D'Oyly Carte, was alerted and was standing by to step into the breach.

In the event, however, Mr Conroy-Ward was in fine voice and gave his usual scintillating rendition of what must surely be the fastest and most tongue-twisting



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## TURKEY IN CRISIS

Not so very long ago there was a so-called "northern tier" of stable, non-Arab, pro-western Muslim countries along the southern border of the Soviet Union, acting as a buffer between Moscow and what seemed by comparison a dangerously volatile Arab world. Today Mr Dulles's northern tier has been replaced by Dr Brezhnev's "arc of instability", and it is the Arab world which looks almost stable by comparison. Pakistan's military regime is riding with difficulty a violent Islamic reaction. Soviet troops have poured into Afghanistan, formerly non-aligned, Iran is in the throes of an Islamic revolution. The Central Treaty Organization has been dissolved.

That leaves Turkey, and Turkey has all the while been quietly disintegrating. Political terrorism there has claimed an average of twenty-five lives per week in the past two years, while the Turkish state has been living in a condition of virtual bankruptcy. For lack of foreign exchange the population is having to live without heating, fuel, coffee and other staple commodities. And this is happening in a country which is a member of Nato and of the Council of Europe, even a would-be candidate for the European Community; a country, moreover, that is proud of its westernized culture and democratic government.

Is Turkey too a candidate for Islamic revolution? It seems not. The secularization undertaken by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was a much more thorough job than anything attempted by his contemporary and admirer, Reza

Shah, and the Muslim revivalist party led by Mr Necmettin Erbakan has been in steady retreat since its election success in 1973, in spite—or more likely because—of its participation in government from 1974 to 1977. Both he and the militant right-wing leader, ex-Colonel Alpaslan Türkeş, have tried to exploit Muslim feeling, but neither has chosen to identify himself with revolutionary Iran—an example that seemingly holds little appeal for any Turks.

It is possible that the gap between the ideology of the state created by Ataturk and the religion of the masses has contributed to the present crisis of Turkish democracy, by depriving the state of the legitimacy which religious sanction would give it. But that would be hard to prove, and there are other causes, familiar in other developing countries. Turkey's economic transformation in the last half-century has been remarkable, but has brought with it very rapid urbanization as well as population growth, with all the social dislocation that those imply. Now that economic growth has faltered, the social tensions have become harder, perhaps impossible, to manage.

Some would say that democracy cannot manage such a transformation, or that no political system can do so without convulsions. What is true is that to do so requires a degree of statesmanship and, in a democracy, a willingness on the part of politicians with differing views to work together. Turkey has two main political parties, one on the right (the Justice Party), the other on the centre-left (the Republican People's

Party). Their economic philosophies differ in emphasis but are not poles apart. The JP is liberal-capitalist, but in coalition with Mr Erbakan has been willing to pursue a policy of large-scale state investment in industry—with fairly disastrous economic results. The RPP is social-democratic, but certainly not Marxist. There is no obvious reason why they should not share the responsibility of government, and had they done so since 1973 the present fearsome polarization of state and society might have been avoided.

Much of the blame for what has happened rests with the present prime minister, Mr Demirel, who has not only refused to envisage such a grand coalition, preferring to ally himself with the extreme right, but has used his spells in office (in 1975-77 and again in the past eight weeks) for large-scale purges of the administration aimed at anyone suspected of even moderate left-wing sympathies. But Mr Ecevit's RPP government of 1978-79 was also a grievous disappointment to its supporters, failing to get a grip either on the economy or on the future of Stansted's expansion.

Such a plan would invalidate the Government's time scale objection. Their second point, the introduction of "added burden on the surrounding area"—would in our view be fully offset by a relatively small reduction of employment at Heathrow. Such a reduction could result from the declared intention of the airport's majority employer, British Airways, to reduce its staff numbers over the next few years. It may not generally be recognized that the road traffic resulting from the movement of staff on an airport is many times greater than that which results from passenger movements.

The detailed studies that we have made of the Perry Oaks site for a fifth terminal leave us convinced that there are no valid arguments time scale, surface access, noise, or any other—that outweigh the very large national advantages of developing Heathrow to its full potential. At the very least, as you have suggested, this policy option should be kept open.

Yours truly,

ROY WATTS,  
Chief Executive,  
British Airways,  
Heathrow Airport,  
Hounslow,  
December 24.

Yours truly,  
HARRIS OF GREENWICH,  
House of Lords.

## BICYCLES CLIPPED

To the management of British Rail, now on tenterhooks waiting for the rail unions' response to a set of productivity proposals which could transform the economic state of the service, the current furore about bicycles on the Southern Region may seem very small beer. Certainly the cycling commuter is never likely to make as big a mark upon the balance-sheets as single manning of trains or the closure of redundant marshalling yards. But the way BR is handling the issue may serve as an example in miniature of attitudes towards the customer which are also relevant to the plight that the railways find themselves in.

As from yesterday, rush-hour commuters in and out of London are no longer allowed to bring bicycles with them in the guard's van. Two years ago, BR yielded to a century of lobbying from cycling organizations, and agreed to carry bicycles free on most services, if accompanied by a passenger, instead of charging half the adult fare. Before free travel was introduced, BR carefully studied the market to be sure that the change would generate new traffic. It succeeded in attracting many customers who

used the train for cycling holidays or excursions that they would have found unduly expensive before. But many others saw that they could save on city bus fares, and have a pleasanter ride to work, by bringing their cycles into London with them.

Most of these would have been travelling by rail in any case, and BR appears to feel that they were exploiting a concession intended for others. So the concession has been ended on those services, on the grounds that handling the cycles caused undue obstruction and delay—and also that new trains have been introduced on many lines this week designed for working without a guard, and therefore without a guard's van.

This difficulty would have arisen however smoothly cyclists had wheeled themselves on and off the trains in the past two years. BR have not indicated how much work was put into the possibility of providing space for bicycles on the new trains (nor, indeed, was any detailed study apparently made of how much disruption cyclists actually caused). There is obviously a certain harsh commercial logic about the decision, but it is the logic of the monopolist deter-

mined to minimize unprofitable commitments, not of the entrepreneur eager to win new customers by finding advantageous ways of meeting whatever demand he observes.

Cycling to work is on the whole a good thing. As a rhapsodic article in the *British Medical Journal* recently reminded us, cycling is the most efficient use of energy for generating movement in the entire solar system: in this respect, the Surbiton commuter is at an advantage even over the cheetah bounding in pursuit of its prey. The cyclist creates no pollution, uses no scarce fuels, causes little congestion in the streets, benefits his own health, and enjoys the passing scene far more fully than the motorist.

BR have promised to look at the case again: the examination should not exclude the possibility of keeping the guard's van locked for a few moments on arrival at the London terminus till the first rush has passed, nor that of reintroducing some small charge for cycles after peak hours to cover some costs. It is right and proper to apply commercial principles to a case like this, but a little imagination should go with it.

At the very least, should not the five Official Unionist MPs be told that either they sit on the Government benches and accept the Conservative whip or take their Party out of the National Union?

Conversely, what other political party would tolerate the privilege of representation in its highest counsels to a group who show no corresponding commitment whatever on the other side? The present situation is an insult to Conservatives in Britain who care about the future of Northern Ireland and no doubt also to many of those Ulstermen, of other Northern Ireland parties or of none, who nevertheless support the Conservative Party and no doubt not particularly welcome to Mr Enoch Powell, he brought to an end?

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Thus the Official Unionists are as much a part of the Conservative Party as is any individual constituency Conservative Association in England, Scotland or Wales.

Now that this party is confirmed as the only major party of the province that will not participate in talks at the behest of a Conservative Secretary of State, is it not time that this anomaly, potentially embarrassing to the Conservative Party and no doubt not particularly welcome to Mr Enoch Powell, be brought to an end?

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## COURT CIRCULAR

KENSINGTON PALACE  
January 2: The Duke of Gloucester opened the 49th Model Engineer Exhibition at Wembley Conference Centre this afternoon. Lieutenant-Colonel Simon Bland was in attendance.

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh will attend the laying-up of Lord Mountbatten's Garter banner in St George's Chapel, Windsor, tomorrow.

Princess Alexandra, vice-Patron of the Young Women's Christian Association, will open New House, the new residential wing of the Northampton YWCA on Castillon Street on January 23.

### Latest appointments

Latest appointments include: Professor Michael Way to an independent committee of Advisors on Pesticides for three years from January 1, succeeding Professor J. R. Busvine, who retired on December 31. Mr W. C. Weisbrait, to be secretary to the executive council of the Dundee City Council of Staff. Mr V. Stevens becomes finance secretary.

### Latest wills

Sir Nigel John Mordaunt, of Eisenham, racehorse owner and former member of the Stock Exchange Council, left £555,551 net. Other estates include (net, before tax paid, not disclosed): Prince, Mrs Norah Miller, of Cadogan Gardens, Chelsea ... £44,515; Pearcey, Mr Francis Moore, of Upminster, Ilverton, and his son ... £116,780; Jacobs, Dr John Harry, of Surbiton ... £21,045; Forbes, Mrs Alice Barbara Evelyn, of Eaton Terrace, Westminster ... £157,311; Mason, Mrs Frieda, of Square, Westminster ... £154,810; Adams, Mr Joseph Oliver, of Watford, Northants ... £23,303; Williams, Mr Trevor John, of Chesham ... £178,304.

### 25 years ago

From The Times of Monday, Jan 3, 1955

### Work at Dounreay

From Our Special Correspondent Thurso, Jan 2.—Strangers are quickly spied in these parts—would appear that they are all expected to be bound for Dounreay, once a naval air station and now the site for Britain's newest atomic power station. The work at this experimental station of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority will be of the utmost importance in advancing the use of atomic energy to the advantage of Britain. Dounreay is likely to become the cradle for industrial atomic power. Situated on the moorland about eight miles to the west of Thurso, the site is almost ready for part occupation. The Admiralty have kept the airfield



The new Chief Constable of Belfast and his deputy, with their wives outside Belfast High Court yesterday, after the swearing-in. From left: Chief Constable Mr Jack Hermon, Mrs Jean Hermon, Mrs Patricia McAtamney and joint deputy Chief Constable Mr Michael McAtamney.

Photograph by Harry Kerr

### Today's engagements

London International Boat Show, Earls Court, Exhibition Centre, 10-8.

Exhibitions: The Vaughan Bequest: Turner watercolours, 1800-1840, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, prints and drawings, The Mount, Edinburgh, Scotland, 10-5. Master Glass Palmers, Building centre, 26 Store Street, 9.30-5.30 (last day); Royal Farms, Woodlands, 10-5.30. The Atlantic Neptune, National Maritime Museum, Romney Road, Greenwich, 10-6. Ingres Drawings, v. 1 and 2, Muscum, Cromwell Road, 10-7.30. Cyprus BC, 7,000 years of history, British Museum, Great Russell Street, 10-5.

Films: *Night Mail, Omnibus 159, London on the Move, Great Embankment, Strand, British Museum, London, 12.30.*

Lunchtime Music: Paul Blyth soprano, Annette Dollery, piano, St Olave, 1.05; organ recital, Mervyn Bocking, St Giles, Cripplegate, 1.10; Gervaise Davies, director, by Philip Norman, St Mary-at-Hill, 1.15.

Events for Children: Circus parade, Polka Children's Theatre, 240 The Broadway, 2 and 6.30; *The Golden Ring*, Young Vic Studio, 66 The Cut, 2.

buildings in excellent repair, and with the next few days the Atomic Energy Authority who have now taken over will start preparing for the entry of the first batch of constructional workers. Your Correspondent visited Dounreay today and saw the position where the world's first operational breeder type power reactor will be built. This design, using enriched uranium, will produce heat to generate steam which will be used to drive conventional electrical generating plant. It is also expected to breed as much—and perhaps more—as it consumes. The reactor is an extremely tall cylinder which is refined in a steel pressure sphere about 150ft in diameter; this would confine any highly radioactive substances that might be released by the reactor if it should "run away"; in no circumstances would there be any risk of a serious explosion.

## Secretarial and Non-secretarial Appointments also on page 20

### NON-SECRETARIAL

#### EXPORT EXECUTIVE (or potential executive)

Fluent in Serbo-Croat

for major British export group

Central London. Applications invited from men and women with a good general educational background, commercial or administrative experience, to travel extensively (short term) for trade representation. Competitive compensation given to young graduates with a desire to progress in Serbo-Croat essential.

Managing Director, Massey's Executive Selection (Recruitment), 100 Baker Street, W1. Tel: 01-503 8551.

CLASSICAL MUSIC Agency seeks assistant for travel department. Full time, with knowledge of music business and ability for meticulous organization essential. Tel: 01-229 8291 or 01-229 9160.

TELEPHONE: / RECEPTIONIST

To 25,000, operate a busy reception desk, dealing with visitors, order mini-cabs and book theatre tickets. Good telephone and audio typing skills and initiative required. Salary £4,250, 4 weeks holiday. Please ring 400 2521. Held by Hunt Recruitments.

SECRETARIAL

St Mary's Hospital Medical School

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, WC1P 1PO

EXPERIENCED SECRETARY

with shorthand, required for Department of Experimental Pathology. Previous secretarial experience not necessary. The successful candidate will work mainly for the Professor but will also be required to contribute to this busy teaching, research and clinical department. Commencing salary not less than £2,400 p.a. depending on previous scale of pay, to maximum £2,801 p.a. Excellent working conditions and many facilities. Applications, enclosing curriculum vitae and names and addresses of two referees to The Secretary at above address or telephone 01-703 1232. Ext. 30.

ARCHITECTS in recently converted office in central London require energetic and experienced shorthand secretaries (20-30k) for writing, drawing and general office work. Hours 9.30pm-5pm. Salary £1,800-£2,000 per year. Box 0990 F.

RECEPTIONIST/RECEPTIONIST, with fluent French, ability to type required for Embassy Cultural Services. £1,800 per year. Box 0990 F.

DISPATCHER.须求有经验的文员，负责处理日常文书工作。必须能流利地使用法语，打字机打字能力要好。工资1,800至2,000英镑。请将信件寄至0990 F。

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# THE TIMES

## BUSINESS NEWS

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■ Sterling
\$2.2425 Index 70.2
■ Dollar
Index 84.6
■ Gold
5567.5 an ounce, up \$43.5
■ 3-month money
Interbank 16 15/16 to 17 1/16
Euro 54 1/16 to 14 3/16

## IN BRIEF

### Iran moves to protect its deposits of dollars

Iran has taken steps to safeguard its dollar deposits in European banks in case of United Nations economic sanctions being implemented.

An official at the Iran central bank said yesterday that part of Iran's \$13,000 held in the overseas accounts of European banks has been transferred to banks in other countries.

The official denied reports that Iran had moved billions of dollars from Japanese banks to Algeria and Libya, but admitted that "some funds had been switched between Japanese institutions".

## Desk computer launch

Hewlett-Packard, the California-based electronics group, is today launching a HP98 desktop computer. Costing £1,950 plus VAT, it is aimed at the professional individual in engineering or business. The personal computer market grew from nothing in 1975 to \$330m (about £150m) in 1979, and is expected to reach £3,500m in 1982.

## Building costs rise

Costs of building new houses last year rose by 19 per cent, mainly due to a steep increase in the cost of materials, says a housing cost index published today. The increase is the highest for four years, says the magazine Building.

## Fiat raises prices

Fiat Auto SpA said in Turin it is raising its list prices of commercial vehicles in Italy by an average 3.5 per cent with immediate effect. Prices of Fiat, Lancia and Autobianchi cars in Italy will rise by 3.5 per cent on February 1.

## Reksten case appeal

Norway's Attorney General has decided to appeal against the Bergen city court judgment which last month acquitted Mr Hilmar Reksten on all major charges of tax frauds and violation of currency regulation.

## Swindler case arrest

FBI agents have arrested Mr Raymond Day, president of a New York firm, Archaean Enterprises, which is charged in Chicago with swindling more than 250 persons out of more than \$2m (£ about £1m) in illegal commodity options.

## Lira parity criticised

Signor Rinaldo Ossola, a former director-general of the Bank of Italy and former foreign trade minister said in an article in Il Mondo it will be difficult to defend the parity of the lira against other member currencies of the European Monetary System. The present parity was "unrealistic".

## Argentine rate cut

The Argentine Central Bank has cut the minimum deposit requirement of financial institutions to 15 per cent from 16.5 per cent, effective immediately.

## German trade outlook

Increasing foreign trade burdens on the West German economy, mainly from rising oil prices, will reduce the room for growth in 1980, the German Industry Federation said. However, it said the outlook was good provided everyone remained excessive demands.

## PRICE CHANGES

## Rises

Broken Hill 20p to 620p  
Martin-Black 3p to 25p  
MIM Hides 15p to 25p  
Nrhgate Explor 30p to 460p  
Rand Mine Prop 40p to 270p

### Industry recommending £1,200m project for fast breeder reactor

By Nicholas Hirst

The United Kingdom electricity and nuclear industries have officially recommended the Government to agree to the building of a commercial fast breeder reactor likely to cost at least £1,200m.

In a letter to Mr David Howell, the Secretary of State for Energy, Sir John Hill, chairman of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) has given detailed proposals for establishing the controversial reactor as an option for providing energy supplies from the year 2000.

The letter originally requested by Mr Anthony Wedgwood Benn, Energy Secretary in the previous Government, is written on behalf of the electricity supply authorities, the National Nuclear Corporation, the Atomic Energy Authority and British Nuclear Fuels.

It examines the timing and financing of the project as well as problems of gaining public acceptance for a new generation of nuclear reactors which have been condemned by conservation groups on the ground that they increase the risk of nuclear war because of the increased use of plutonium and that they heighten the dangers of radioactive contamination.

The Government is almost certain to agree to Sir John's request for a single public inquiry into both the siting and possible dangers of the fast reactor, but it will want to get the proposed inquiry into the almost equally controversial American-designed Pressurized Water Reactor (PWR) out of the way first.

Neither the electricity nor the nuclear authorities wish to rush into building a commercial fast reactor. The letter recommends action the government should take to establish it as an option by 2000. To allow reasonable building and testing time, this means a start would have to be made around 1985, and for that a public inquiry would probably be necessary by 1983, by which time a final decision should have been made on the PWR.

Sir John's letter reviews the possibilities of collaboration in building a fast reactor with the French and the Germans, with whom talks have taken place over the past year.

Britain led the way with fast breeders, building an experimental and then a successful prototype fast reactor at Dounreay, Highland which has been widely canvassed as the site for a commercial reactor.

France has, however, taken the lead in building the first commercial fast reactor.

The Government knows that any decision on a fast reactor could arouse public opinion against nuclear power generally. An inquiry will almost certainly be a bitter, hard-fought affair, and its timing will be chosen with great care.

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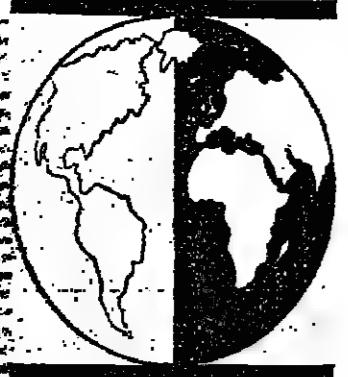
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## US alleges starch export subsidies

The United States Treasury has made a preliminary determination that the European Community is subsidizing exports of dextrines and chemically treated starches derived from corn starch to the United States.

A final decision in this case will be made by March 17.

Imports of this merchandise from the European Community were valued at about \$4.4m (nearly £2m) in 1978.

### Italian fraud case

The Genoa public prosecutor has asked for the commitment to trial on fraudulent bankruptcy charges of Signor Franco Saffio and his brother Signor Alberto Fassio, former owners of the Fasso Shipping Line now in liquidation. He has laid similar charges against Signor Paolo Sampiero, former administrative director of a subsidiary which owned two Genoa newspapers.

### Bonni living costs up

West Germany's cost of living rose 0.4 per cent in December from November and was up 5.4 per cent from December 1978, according to preliminary figures released by the Federal Statistics Office at Wiesbaden.

### Hongkong exports up

Hongkong's domestic exports for November 1979 at £485m were up 40.5 per cent over November 1978. Imports at £748m were up 28.2 per cent and re-exports at £182m up 44.7 per cent.

### Layoffs at Zanussi

Industrie Zanussi SPA, Europe's largest manufacturer of home appliances, is expected to propose to unions to make new layoffs in its colour television operations because of disappointing sales, union sources in Italy said yesterday.

### China allows cuts

China has decided to allow price cuts of up to 20 per cent for 16 kinds of industrial products ranging from machine tools to car parts, the Workers' Daily paper in Peking reports.

### French prices rise

The new year brought with it a round of price increases in the public and private sectors in France which will undoubtedly push retail price growth in January above the 0.7 per cent increase recorded in December, economic observers in Paris say.

# Bass

LIMITED

*Extracts from the Statement by the Chairman, Mr. Derek Palmer*

In the year to 30th September 1979, sales volumes of all products and services increased significantly over the previous year. Profits before taxation have not shown the same improvement; this is due mainly to the delay imposed on our proposed price increase in January 1979 by the Price Commission investigation.

Since the introduction of the self-financing productivity schemes in November 1977, we have had far fewer stoppages, indeed apart from one unfortunate local stoppage of 20 days, there has been nothing of more than token interference with production and distribution. This is a great improvement over earlier years. We must continue this excellent progress in the interests of employees, customers and shareholders alike.

In furtherance of this policy, we are proposing to introduce a share ownership scheme for employees under the provisions of the Finance Act 1978, which gives tax benefits both to recipients and to the Company. The purpose of introducing this scheme is to give all United Kingdom full-time employees who have worked for more than three years in Bass an opportunity to share in the progress of the Company year by year. Our aim is to establish a happy team working together towards the single purpose of maintaining a successful company for the benefit of all involved.

It is the Board's intention that shareholders should receive dividends growing in line with earnings in real terms.

#### The Group's 1979 results in brief

	52 weeks	53 weeks
Sales to customers	£1,134.3m	£1,044.4m
Trading profit	£124.9m*	£116.6m
Profit before taxation	£111.6m*	£105.5m
Retained for reinvestment	£66.8m	£57.1m
In the business	31.8p	24.4p
Earnings per share	7.8p	6.1p
Dividend per share	7.8p	6.1p

\*After providing £2.4m for proposed Employee Share Ownership Scheme

The objective of the Board is to maintain steady dividend growth over the years rather than to reflect short-term earnings fluctuations. For the year to 30th September 1979 the level of recommended dividend has been calculated independently of that of the previous year to provide a satisfactory reward for shareholders while retaining sufficient to allow the generation of future earnings for a continuing real growth in dividends. The increase proposed reflects the ending of dividend restrictions.

The Company has one of the strongest portfolios of leading brands in the beer, wines and spirits and soft drinks industry. Despite this we think it is vitally important for us to lead in developing new products and in launching new brands to satisfy consumer demands. In recent years the Company has become increasingly active in this field of innovation.

We have continued our established policy of investing our cash flow and in addition we have used some of our borrowing facilities towards capital expenditure of £11m. In the current year to 30th September 1980, we intend to continue to expand in all areas of the business and to this end we have authorised capital expenditure of £136m.

The current year has started well and we have enjoyed a period of fair weather in the autumn which has helped sales. Costs, however, continue to rise and adjustment of our prices in the early part of 1980 will be inevitable. We are hopeful of further progress this year, in spite of the difficult economic conditions ahead.

If you would like to receive a copy of the Bass 1979 Annual Review, and are not a shareholder, please complete this coupon and return it to:

Mr. M. F. Quatrano, The Secretary,

Bass Ltd., 30 Portland Place, London WI.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

T

Motor industry delegation will press for renewed restraint on imports

## Japan is 'rushing cars to Britain'

British motor industry leaders preparing to fly to Tokyo to press for renewed restraint on Japanese exports to the United Kingdom are worried by reports of record shipments already on the way.

Last night motor industry and shipping sources said the rush to get large numbers of Japanese cars into Britain was being given very high priority.

A European manufacturer who has been using the specially adapted Japanese ships to carry its cars to the United States from Japan on their return journey, said: "Our shipping people reported last month that Japanese ships were returning empty to cope with unusually large numbers of shipments to Europe in the first weeks of the New Year."

The worry is that, with the United Kingdom car market expected to fall sharply this year—from 1.7m registrations to 1.4m—the Japanese will insist that they should sell at least the same number of cars as last year, around 180,000, accounting for 10.6 per cent of the total market.

The arrival of large stocks of Japanese cars will intensify the already fierce sales battle in a declining market.

Sir Michael Edwards, BL's chairman, wants a further period of voluntary restraint. He made this clear in Tokyo during his Christmas visit to sign an agreement for a Honda car to be assembled in Britain next year.

In a letter to *The Times* yesterday Sir Michael said: "Take the matter of Japanese car imports. Are the French, German and Italian motor industries that much stronger that they can hold Japanese

penetration of their markets last year to 2.1, 5.5 and 0.1 per cent respectively while in Britain, Japanese cars took 10.6 per cent of the market? No, we must look to a local healthy chauvinism in those countries for much of the answer; this chauvinism is virtually non-existent in Britain."

Mr David Andrews, BL's executive vice-chairman, is expected to be among the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders' delegation due to meet a team from the Japanese Automobile Manufacturers Association in Tokyo in a few weeks time.

Reliable BL sources say that he will urge the Japanese to stick to their 1979 market share, which would result in an effective reduction of over 30,000 cars in their 1980 United Kingdom sales.

Dealers holding Japanese franchises have protested that last year's voluntary restraint has left them so short of cars that they will have difficulty in getting through the winter.

Their position has been further weakened by the manufacturers' insistence that they should take a higher proportion of large cars. In many cases the arrival of these more expensive cars coincided with the slump in large car sales which followed the summer increase in petrol prices and shows no sign of easing.

The Motor Agents' Association, which claims to represent 85 per cent of the retail motor trade, has called for an easing of the restrictions on Japanese car imports to prevent hardship to its members holding import franchises.

Clifford Webb



Mr. David Andrews: expected to join British delegation pressing for Japan to restrain car exports.

## Fresh step towards harmonizing EEC auditing procedures

By Adrienne Gleeson

Another step towards the harmonization of accounting procedures is taken today, when the Union Européenne des Experts Comptables Economiques et Financiers (UEC) releases its exposure draft on the audit report. This sets out to analyse the purpose of and establish the form in which auditors throughout the EEC express their opinion on a company's accounts.

At home, the Department of Trade's response to harmonization requirements, the Green Paper "Company Accounting and Disclosure", is broadly acceptable, according to the Midlands Industry Group of Finance Directors; but it has some sharp criticisms of individual proposals.

The London factories had been accounting for about 50 per cent of the company's footwear output which produced £1bn in sales in the financial year ended last May.

The Welsh factories could be expanded and the company has spare land in Wales where extra productive units could be built.

One factor in the company's planning is that footwear sales in the United Kingdom this year are expected to be hit in common with most other retail sectors.

Although the British footwear industry has had many difficulties in trying to boost exports,

whether they are in accordance with the law.

At the least, the draft says, the audit report should identify the financial statements on which the auditor is reporting, express an opinion on the outcome of the examination and contain the auditor's signature and date. The auditor's opinion may be unqualified (expressing the auditor's approval in an affirmative manner), qualified, adverse (which should be given "only if the auditor is unable to approve the financial statements taken as a whole, due to disagreement which is so fundamental that a qualified opinion would not be adequate"); or the report should contain a disclaimer of opinion. The report should state clearly and concisely the matters of disagreement or uncertainty.

The Midlands Industry Group of Finance Directors says that the UEC exposure draft deals only with the "short form report" in which the auditor sets out the scope of his work, and his opinion on the financial statements he has produced.

The draft stresses that this report should be capable of being clearly understood and should clearly indicate what accounting principles have been applied. It says the audit report should at least express whether the financial statements give a true and fair view, and (if so required by local legislation),

## 'No benefit' in monetary base control

By John Whitmore

Financial Correspondent

The introduction of a system of monetary base control as a method of managing the money supply in the United Kingdom would be unlikely to produce any real benefits, according to two City economists.

Writing in the *Lloyd's Bank Review*, Richard Coghlan and Carolyn Sykes argue that such a rigid form of control would present tremendous technical difficulties for the monetary authorities and could lead to unnecessary and undesired interest rate movements.

The authors suggest a better way of improving monetary control would be for the Government to accept interest rates consistent with its monetary aims, to curb the public sector borrowing requirement.

They recommend a greater range of Treasury bills, with maturities running up to 18 months, and a certificate of gilt deposit, which could be bought at a time of interest rate uncertainty. These deposits could be made attractive and could subsequently be switched into conventional gilt stocks on advantageous terms.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Two questions of principle over post office tariffs

From the chairman of the Mail Users' Association Limited

Sir, You reported (December 28) a government statement rejecting the recommendations of the Post Office Users' National Council regarding the Post Office's proposed tariff increases. The rationale of the Government's statement is that the Post Office must be free to make its own management decisions on how to meet its targets. This proposition is consistent with the present Government's philosophy of disengagement from managerial decision-making—from which I would not wish to dissent.

But when this philosophy is applied to the Post Office, two questions of principle require to be answered:

1. Can the same philosophy of managerial freedom which is held appropriate to industry and commerce in general, be applied to a public monopoly?

2. Is it right that the Post Office should have total liberty to unload the consequences of its own inefficiency on its customers in the form of higher prices?

2. In as much as the POUNC was conceived as a restraint on management freedom in the public interest, what role is it expected to play in current changed circumstances? If the Government ignores its present recommendations, are there

any possible recommendations which it might heed? If Post Office management is to be free to exercise its commercial judgment, then what is the POUNC for? To provide a fig-leaf? And if far more than that, then surely its pronouncements should be treated with more respect.

The issue of the correct relationship between Government, the customer, and public monopolies has never yet been resolved. Government interference in management is not the answer, but neither is unrestricted management. It is up to the Government, now drafting legislation to split the Post Office, to give serious attention to this problem in relation to the two new monopoly organizations that will be created.

Yours faithfully,

ROBIN FAIRLIE,

Chairman,

Mail Users' Association Ltd.

29 Sackville Street,

Piccadilly, London W1X 1DB.

December 31.

Yours faithfully,

VICTOR ROSS,

Chairman,

Association of Mail Order Publishers,

1 New Burlington Street,

London W1X 1FD

December 31.

Yours faithfully,

ROBERT TROTTER,

Chairman,

World Sugar Research Organisation,

58 Jermyn Street,

London SW1 6LX.

December 31.

Yours faithfully,

J. A. C. HUGILL,

Director General, World Sugar Research Organisation,

58 Jermyn Street,

London, SW1 6LX.

December 31.

Yours faithfully,

AUBREY L. DIAMOND,

Director,

Institute of Advanced Legal Studies,

University of London,

Charles Clore House,

17 Russell Square,

London WC1B 5DR.

## Comparisons of performance

From the Director, the Centre for Interfirm Comparison

Sir, Mrs Briggs' letter (December 19) contains a prime example of the misuse of comparative data in performance assessment. She

BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

## Engineers and a steel strike

As if an engineering strike, a renewed bout of inflation, soaring interest rates and the impact of a strong currency on export business were not enough, engineering companies now have to contend with a national steel strike.

It is only because of the comfort provided by the last Government's stock relief scheme that some engineers are still with us today, though the damage sustained during the past twelve months is already becoming clear as 1979 results are published. That theme will continue for some time yet, and more significantly if those results are adjusted for inflation they would show that many companies, particularly in engineering, are in real terms returning heavy losses.

This latter point will become more important as the market assesses the dividend-paying capacity of companies whose present stock market ratings rest heavily on historic yields well into double-figures. The question now is how much worse will the position of engineering companies be after a steel strike? As ever the answer is unclear. Just as some companies emerged from the engineering strike last year in better shape than others, so some look better placed than others to survive even a prolonged steel strike.

First, of course, there is probably enough steel in the system, either in the hands of consumers or merchants, to last for perhaps a month. Going further, industries like shipbuilding and construction possibly hold stocks sufficient to last about a year; many general engineers (given that they had plenty of warning that a steel strike was possible) also hold stocks of perhaps three months.

The first effects, then, will be felt by those who tend to live on a more or less hand-to-mouth basis—motor manufacturers for example whose stock-turn of around four or five times a year suggests that supplies could run out within eight weeks. The reverberations of that happening on the myriad of suppliers to the motor plants are obvious enough.

The possibility of this sort of picture unfolding will become clearer in two or three weeks. Certainly the position now is not one which would of itself merit bailing out engineering shares. At the end of the day the steel strike may well be one of a number of factors during 1979/80 which forced the weak either over the brink or near to it. The outlook, then, is for some bankruptcies accompanied by a bout of rationalisation in the sector towards the end of this year.

### Insurance broking Bowring's dilemma

With the prospect of a long legal battle in store over the Marsh & McLennan bid, Bowring's share price fell back 7p to 126p last night. This is only 15 per cent above the level before Marsh revealed its intentions and provides a fair indication of the market's doubts both about the American company's true intentions and its ability to force a satisfactory takeover of Bowring through the Lloyd's blockade.

Bowring's attempt to take the battle into the courts could represent a great difficulty. It has clearly given Marsh much confidential information during 15 months of talks on a premium pooling plan and if Marsh is denied use of that information in bid, the American group could be hamstrung by SEC rules on disclosure.

Bowring, however, with perhaps a quarter of its broking business supplied by Marsh has the most to lose. If it fights off the Americans that business will almost certainly begin to evaporate as Marsh looks elsewhere for an entree to the Lloyd's market.

The prospect of being left on the shelf with transatlantic weddings going on all around has not been lost on Bowring, which is still attempting to persuade Marsh to revert to its former tack of a gentlemanly pooling arrangement. But Marsh having nearly ensnared its prey—it has switched several big lines of business to Bowring in recent months—will want to make the best of its advantage.

Another possible alternative could be for Bowring to seek shelter with another British group as seemed to be the case in the controversial Sedgwick Forbes/Bland Payne merger. It has yet to be seen however whether SFBP is equal to the sum of its parts and such is the turmoil in the industry

now that there must be doubts about that group's ability to secure a satisfactory pooling plan with the United States Alexander & Alexander group.

Longer term, prospects for all British broking groups which rely heavily on United States business could be ominous. Lloyd's firms believe that the Americans need Lloyd's as much as the London market needs the Americans. But world-wide insurance capacity and expertise is growing and the Americans will continue to increase



Mr Peter Bowring, chairman of C T Bowring.

the pressure to be allowed to deal with the London market on their own terms if alternatives like the mooted New York Exchange get off the ground.

In the case of Bowring itself, the shares could be worth 80p more if Marsh managed to stage a bid and perhaps 20p less if it did not, and the odds at present look heavily against a successful takeover.

### Japan

#### Ready to bounce back?

Investment-proof assets like oil and gold evidently have a place in every investor's portfolio in times like these; and to go by the way in which the price of each has been behaving investors are only too aware of it. The British investor, newly freed from the shackles of exchange controls, appears to be following the herd. Such a lack of imagination is likely to prove dangerous. Granted that there is a strong case for diversifying out of total dependence on the United Kingdom economy, he should perhaps be looking east instead.

The Japanese economy, traditionally one of the strongest in the world, has suffered over the past 12 months from the country's all but total dependence on imported oil, and is likely to suffer still more in the immediate future. In consequence the Tokyo New Stock Exchange Index is only marginally higher now than it was a year ago, and the yen is a great deal lower. So any British investor putting his money into Japan a year ago would be a lot worse off today. The question now is whether this setback represents a buying opportunity.

There are some signs that the worst is almost over. Wholesale price rises, now running at around 15 per cent on a year-by-year basis, are forecast to peak out in the first quarter of the year, and to fall, possibly into single figures, by the year-end. Gross national product is still rising, though at a very slow rate relative to its historic performance.

Given that some Middle Eastern oil producers are already exercising restraint in their pricing policy, and that world economic recession is likely to force restraint on others before the year-end, the balance of payments is not likely to be as direly affected by the latest round of oil price increases as seemed possible a month ago. So the worst of the pressure on the yen is likely to be over.

Given a stable, perhaps even an improving currency, Japan has obvious advantages for the investor in search of performance. Many companies are not merely efficient, they are inventive. Since an improvement in the yen could pose a threat to those which are export led, there is a strong argument for going for those companies which have a lead on all the competition—notably those involved in high technology industries.

They should prove their worth on a 12-month view, even without a boost from currency: with that, too, they are likely to prove the best performers from a diversification into equities.

## Economic notebook

### Currencies in crisis

Many men have tried to change the world monetary system: the Ayatollah Khomeini has succeeded. The fruits of his success are likely to be uncomfortable for all of us during the first half of this new decade.

Until the events in Iran began to unfold last year there was something approaching a consensus about what the international monetary system is and ought to be in the years ahead. It was recognized by most observers that we could not go on indefinitely with a system where the benchmark, the dollar, was permanently weak.

But it seemed quite plausible to suggest that the run-down of the dollar's role as the sole major world reserve currency could be achieved reasonably peacefully.

A number of technical schemes were under discussion, including a "substitution account" to arrange a phased run-down of the reserves held in dollars by countries throughout the world. There were even signs that, however grudgingly, countries such as West Germany might be prepared to accept a greater reserve role for their own currencies.

That easy transition from a system with one reserve currency to one with many is not really plausible now. The explosion in gold's price in recent weeks is a symptom of a much deeper malaise affecting the outlook for international payments, the monetary system and the economic outlook for the West as a whole.

Consider first the balance of payments outlook during the early part of this decade. Even with sluggish growth in the western industrial countries, we shall have to expect very large surpluses by the members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Morgan Guaranty, which has tended to be one of the more optimistic forecasters of Opec's payments position in the past, suggests that the organization's surplus will stay above \$70,000m for years to come. Private banks have already made it clear that they cannot be expected to handle the deficit financing which will be the counterpart of these surpluses.

There are worrying signs that some of the oil producers are, in any case, cutting out the banks and investing directly in assets or are going straight into gold.

Much has been said by world leaders of the lessons which we learned from the great oil crisis of 1973. Yet we face the effects of the latest round of price increases, which became inevitable the moment Iranian production was cut back, in many ways less well prepared than last time.

So we shall have to see a greater willingness by the United States' partners to help solve the problem. Yet the last IMF meeting in Belgrade saw only the most lukewarm endorsement of the idea for setting up a "substitution account" into which countries could trade dollars which they hold as reserves.

Prospects for that do not look good at the moment. Nor have the past weeks given much encouragement that we could move back to a system where there are stable parities between the chief currencies. President Giscard D'E斯塔ing of France is thought to be preparing such a scheme for the next world economic summit in Venice in June. But his scheme looks likely to have at its centre a commitment by central banks to buy and sell gold at a fixed price. Apart from American objections to this it is very difficult at the present balance of payments position was better than it had been at any time since the war. The real worry, however, was the dollar gap, the deficit in Britain's trade with North America.

One of the first people in Whitehall to appreciate the inevitability and desirability of devaluation, combined with a measure of deflation, to restore the country's financial and trading position, was Mr Robert Hall, now Lord Rotherham of Silverspur, and Trenance, director of the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office. He found a kindred spirit in his close colleague Sir Edwin (now Lord) Plowden, chief planning officer in the Treasury.

The issue first surfaced in the Treasury when Mr Hall, after talking with Sir Edwin, expressed his conviction in a minute section of his files for 1949 to Sir Edward Bridges, Permanent Secretary to the Treasury. As far as I know, this was the first mention," Lord Rotherham recalled.

Bridges arranged for Mr Hall to talk to Sir Henry Wilson Smith, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which he did in April 1979. Rotherham remembers: "Cripps was an unusual man to work for, but he was against devaluation. He was the last man to be persuaded to change his mind."

His first devaluation minute is not available at the Public Record Office, as the Treasury's internal files for 1949 have yet to be put on public display. A substantial reconstruction of events, is possible, however, thanks to the minutes of the Cabinet and its Economic Policy Committee and the files of the Foreign Office Economic Section which were opened yesterday.

David Blake

represent a major step in the solution of the general problems of trading and financial relations which confront us".

It had already become clear that the United Kingdom and United States governments would have to consult before matters got out of hand because of what Mr Bolton had described as the "Americans' goldfish bowl discussions".

Sir Oliver suggested that Mr Hall should be present at such talks as he could speak "in a manner which would carry weight with the Americans".

It was felt necessary to keep the resulting trip to Washington by Sir Henry Wilson Smith and Mr Hall highly secret and a cover story was invented to the effect that they were simply engaged in routine consultations with Sir Oliver and Mr Sydney Caine, the Treasurer of the Bank of England.

On July 8, Cripps told Mr John Snyder, United States Secretary to the Treasury, during their London talks: "if some general solution was proposed to ensure stability we would consider the revaluation (sic) of sterling", though he doubted its efficacy.

Next day, the documents make clear, the Americans acquiesced with the greatest reluctance to the insertion of the phrase "in this connexion no suggestion was made that sterling be devalued". On the communiqué on the Cripps-Snyder talks.

Ten days later, Cripps, a sick man, left for a Zurich sanatorium. By the end of the month, the economic ministers left in London and the Prime Minister had come to accept devaluation as inevitable. The official and political machines now thought as one and "Operation Rose" was under way.

(Tomorrow: the politicians are converted)



Lord Plowden (left) and Lord Rotherham; kindred spirits on the road to devaluation.

## Deciphering the 'Rose' code

The sceptical Treasury was forced to put the issue high on its agenda by open and persistent talk in Washington, inside the United States Treasury and the International Monetary Fund, about the prospect of a sterling devaluation.

On May 12, Mr (now Sir) George Bolton, an executive director of the Bank of England, in a telegram to Sir Henry Wilson Smith, head of the Treasury under the 1949 rule, by matching telegram No 4312 from Washington Ambassador Sir Oliver Franks to the Foreign Office with a ciphered message from the Foreign Office to Washington, it emerges that "Rose" was the code name for 1949's best kept political secret—the devaluation of the pound from \$4.03 to \$2.80.

Lord Armstrong now chairman of the Midland Bank, confirms this: "I had a file which contained all this sort of thing. It eventually contained the draft of the devaluation broadcast. I called it 'The London Rose Show' because that was the point at which we showed the Rose."

The Rose Code, which would have baffled any foreign cryptographer even if he had managed to break the Foreign Office's cipher, was the culmination of six months of agonized debate in financial circles in Washington and London.

It all began in the early months of 1949 when it became clear that the country's gold and dollar reserves were beginning to ebb away in a prospect darkened still further by an impending American recession. Paradoxically, at this point, the overall balance of payments position was better than it had been at any time since the war. The real worry, however, was the dollar gap, the deficit in Britain's trade with North America.

One of the first people in

Whitehall to appreciate the inevitability and desirability of devaluation, combined with a measure of deflation, to restore the country's financial and trading position, was Mr Robert Hall, now Lord Rotherham of Silverspur, and Trenance, director of the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office. He found a kindred spirit in his close colleague Sir Edwin (now Lord) Plowden, chief planning officer in the Treasury.

The issue first surfaced in the Treasury when Mr Hall, after talking with Sir Edwin, expressed his conviction in a minute section of his files for 1949 to Sir Edward Bridges, Permanent Secretary to the Treasury. As far as I know, this was the first mention," Lord Rotherham recalled.

Bridges arranged for Mr Hall to talk to Sir Henry Wilson Smith, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which he did in April 1979. Rotherham remembers: "Cripps was an unusual man to work for, but he was against devaluation. He was the last man to be persuaded to change his mind."

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At this stage, none of the EPC resolved nothing. Ministers sought through a combination of dollar import controls, hopes for an upturn in the American economy and more dollar aid under the Marshall Plan, to avoid the unpalatable.

At this stage, Cripps, who had an almost physical revulsion from lying, was forced to deceive Parliament and the public.

On July 7, he told the Commons: "The Government have not the slightest intention of devaluing the pound".

According to the documents just disclosed, earlier that day at a meeting of the EPC, ministers talked of the prospect, as they had talked of little else for the past three weeks.

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## Clearer waters for shipping?

### Michael Baily

The last five years have seen the longest and deepest shipping recession of modern times.

A year ago the prediction was that it still had several years to run, certainly for tankers, and perhaps also for dry bulk cargo ships, to which it was feared that the tanker surplus was being progressively transferred.

Now the whole scene has changed and already there is apprehension in some quarters that gloom will give way prematurely to euphoria and thus worsen the condition before there has been the chance of a proper recovery.

Consider what happened in 1979—freight rates for both tankers and dry cargo vessels roughly doubled, with tanker rates rising from around worldwide 30 to 50-60, and the General Council of British Shipping tramps freight index rising from 134 (1976=100) in November, 1978, to 235 in November, 1979.

Laid-up tonnage declined by about two-thirds, from 39 million tons (six per cent of last year's oil production) to 12 million tons (2 per cent); of which idle tankers dropped from 30 million tons to nine million tons and dry cargo ships from 16 million tons to three million.

Secondhand and scrap prices roughly doubled, with

there, though less of it is now in creeks and fjords.

New orders have meanwhile doubled, from an average of 600,000 gross tons a month in 1978 to nearly 1.2 million in 1979. Last September some three million tons was ordered with big coal carriers of about 130,000 tons featuring prominently.

Finally, though world shipyard capacity has been trimmed back sharply, it still amounts to about 30 million tons, roughly double what is likely to be needed.

Taking all these factors into account—and the possibility of an actual drop in world trade this year—the conclusion must be that though there has been a big improvement, it has to be treated with caution.

Market opinion, though, predicts a positive shipping market by 1981-82 and strong shipbuilding demand by 1985. The problem for some will be getting there. More than half the new tonnage ordered in recent months has been by Far East owners in Far East yards.

British yards have picked up only about 200,000 tons, while the British fleet has continued to decline with a loss of 5.7 million tons in the



## Stock Exchange Prices

**ACCOUNT DAYS:** Dealings Begin, Dec 28. Dealings End, Jan 11. Contango Day, Jan 14. Settlement Day, Jan 21.

**§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days.**

## **Further rise in golds**



## PERSONAL CHOICE



Sir Gérard Evans as Don Pasquale (ITV, 9.30)

**BBC 1**

10.00 am What-a-Mess: Frank Muir tells the story: A Very Good Dog, Indeed.

10.05 Jackanory: Martin Jarvis reads Clare Moseley's story, The Bionic Mole. Clare is only nine.

10.20 Captain Caveman: cartoon, The Strange Case of the Creature from Space (r).

10.30 Why Don't You...? A child's alternative to watching TV.

10.55 Magic Roundabout: for children—but not exclusively so (r).

11.00 Mickey Mouse Club: cartoon, Little Blue Coupe.

11.15 Greatest Heroes of the Bible: two stories, today—Jacob's Challenge and Joseph and his Brothers.

12.45 pm News and weather.

1.00 Mary Clipperfield's Wildes School on Earth: part 2 of this film about the training of circus animals.

1.30 Heads and Tails: Animal life—where you would least expect it.

**BBC 2**

11.00 am Play School: same as BBC 1, 3.55. Closedown at 11.25.

3.55 pm International Tennis: The Brabiff Airways World Doubles Championship, from Olympia.

4.50 Open University: S101 Preparatory Maths; 5.05 First Years.

5.40 Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe: start of a 12-part serial, designed to destroy Earth with a plague.

6.00 Atoms for Enquiring Minds: Professor Eric M. Rogers, of Princeton and the Nuffield Foundation, gives a lecture on atoms that explode.

7.00 The Brothers Lionheart:

penultimate episode in this Swedish-made fantasy.

7.25 News: 2nd sub-titles for the hard of hearing.

7.35 The Line That Refused to Die: Abandoned in 1954, the Festung narrow-gauge railway in North Tyrol has been brought back to life. The story of its resurrection is told by Robert Syme.

8.15 Picture Pictures: On the day that his new film, La Luna, opens in London, Italian film director Ettore Scola is interviewed by Garry Shandling. He was Bernolotto, who made Last Tango in Paris, The Conformist, and 1960.

9.00 Peter Ustinov and Natalie Wood at the Hermitage: The two performers (both with Russian blood) take us round the great art

and history museum in Leningrad (see Personal Choice).

9.30 A Celebration for Stephane Grappelli: Part 1 of a two-part series of the great jazz violinist's concert at the Royal Albert Hall, given to celebrate the virtuoso's 70th birthday. We also see him play with David Lockwood and David Grisman. Part 2 is screened tomorrow night.

10.20 News and weather.

11.35 Richard Stilgoe: A look back over a festive week. Wit and music from a man who handles both with ease.

12.00 Music At Night: Ninth movement from Liszt's piano suite The Christmas Tree, played by Rhonda Gillespie. Closedown at

1.30 Crown Court: the case of the blinded pop star. The verdict is returned tomorrow.

2.00 Once in a Lifetime: the involved crime story of The Village that Would Not Talk. True tale of a man who lived to tell the police of his own murder (r).

2.45 The Phoenix: Two Days that Shocked the Church. Condensed by Henry Livingstone, with Jack Shepherd as an over-eager security guard at a building society office (r).

3.45 Looks Familiar: The stars, the music and the films of the Thirties and Forties. With Denis Norden and actress Sheridan Smith and Carol Channing. George Axelrod.

4.15 Film: Huckleberry Finn. Yet another version of the famous Mark Twain story of runaway boys. Ron Howard plays Huck.

5.45 News: 6.00 Thematics News.

6.35 Crossroads: Good news for Alison Cottrell.

7.00 Walt Disney Classics cartoons.

7.15 Film: T. R. Sloan's of the Secret Service: Made-for-TV film about a secret agent (Robert Loggia) on the track of a dehydrating machine stolen by international agents disguised as guns. A comedy, naturally.

8.15 News.

9.30 Don Pasquale: Harlech Television's film of the Donizetti opera, with Sir Gérard Evans as the eponymous husband, Lillian Watson as his arranged wife, Ryland Davies as her lover and Simon Syms as Dr Malibran. With the Welsh National Opera Orchestra and chorus (see Personal Choice).

11.35 The Streets of San Francisco: crime series. Tonight: the body-builder whose strength gets out of control.

12.00 am Close: Poems read by Cyril Luckham.

WHAT THE SYMBOLS MEAN: \* STEREO; \*\* BLACK AND WHITE; (r) REPEAT.

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If you find the terms of the Cadetship a bit restricting, you can bump up your LEA grant with an Army Bursary.

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Further particulars are available from the Registrar, University of Hull, HU6 7RX to whom applications for 1980 closing date of 1 January 1980, giving details of qualifications, experience and referees, should be sent by 31 January 1980.

Applications together with the names of two referees should be sent later than 31 January 1980.

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**AIRD**—On December 13th, 1979,  
at University Hospital, Croydon,  
Surrey, Alan James Aird, son  
of Captain Alan and Mrs. Alan  
Aird, and son of Mr. and Mrs. Alan  
Aird.

**BLISS**—On December 27th, at  
Bromley Hospital, Bromley, Kent,  
to Michael and Jean, a son,

**BRUNN**—On December 28th, at  
the Royal Free Hospital, London,  
to James and Anna Brunnen, a  
son.

**HUTTON-DOVIES**—On December  
28th, at Queen Mary's Hospital,  
Roehampton, to Kenneth and  
Joyce Hutton-Dovies, a son.

**IRVINE**—On Christmas Eve, 1979,  
at the Royal Free Hospital, London,  
to John and Rosemary Irvine, a  
son.

**JACKSON**—On December 27th, in  
Bolton General Hospital, to  
Peter and Ruth Jackson, a son.

**LEWIS**—On December 24th, at  
Bolton General Hospital, to  
John and Linda Lewis, a son.

**MORRISON**—On December 27th, at  
Bolton General Hospital, to  
John and Linda Morrison, a son.

**ROBERTSON**—On December 27th, at  
Bolton General Hospital, to  
John and Linda Robertson, a  
son.

**SHAW**—On December 24th, at  
Bolton General Hospital, to  
John and Linda Shaw, a son.

**SMITH**—On December 24th, at  
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John and Linda Smith, a son.

**STEVENS**—On December 27th, at  
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John and Linda Stevens, a son.

**WHITE**—On December 27th, at  
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**WILSON**—On December 27th, at  
Bolton General Hospital, to  
John and Linda Wilson, a son.

**WILSON**—On December 27th, at  
Bolton General Hospital, to  
John and Linda Wilson, a son.

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John and Linda Wilson, a son.

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John and Linda Wilson, a son.

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John and Linda Wilson, a son.

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John and Linda Wilson, a son.

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John and Linda Wilson, a son.

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John and Linda Wilson, a son.

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Bolton General Hospital, to  
John and Linda Wilson, a son.

**WILSON**—On December 27th, at  
Bolton General Hospital, to  
John and Linda Wilson, a son.

**WILSON**—On December